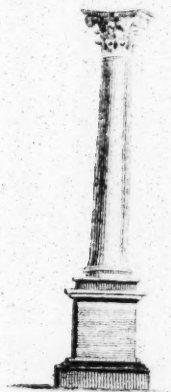


PERSONAL NOBILITY:
OR,
L E T T E R S
TO A
YOUNG NOBLEMAN.



PERSONAL NOBILITY:
OR,
LETTERS
TO A
YOUNG NOBLEMAN,
ON THE
CONDUCT OF HIS STUDIES, AND THE
DIGNITY OF THE PEERAGE.



INJURIOSO NE PEDE PROBUAS
STANTEM COLUMNAM.

HOR.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR CHARLES DILLY.
MDCCXCIII.



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
CHARLES JAMES FOX.

SIR,

WHEN I think of *Personal Nobility*, the title of my book, I am led, by a very natural association of ideas, to think of you.

The noble stand you lately made
in favour of PEACE AND LIBERTY,
when popular clamour—the *civium*
a *ardor*

ardor prava jubentium—would have drowned the voice of a less able advocate, when your standard was deserted by many who shrunk from your side in the hour of danger, has placed your name higher than it ever yet stood, among independent Englishmen, IN THE MIDDLE RANKS, who neither enjoy nor expect the favours of ministerial influence. If you have lost a few valuable friends within the walls, you have gained the esteem of tens of thousands on the outside, who, before this test, had no just idea of the purity and intrepidity of your PUBLIC virtue.

In

In search of a living *example* of eloquence, generosity, and unshaken perseverance in disinterested conduct, to enforce the *precepts* of the following Letters to a young Nobleman, I could find none more brilliant than your own, especially since, forsaken by some of your auxiliaries, you have stood the more illustriously conspicuous, IPSE AGMEN, in the front of the battle.

My praise can add nothing to your glory. But permit me to adorn my own pages with a name, which is of late more than ever

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illustrious in the eyes of all who,
though attached to the forms, are
yet more firmly attached to the
spirit, of the constitution.

I am,

S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

JAN. 24, 1793.

P R E F A C E.

IT appears to me, that ancient learning is not sufficiently attended to in the education of modern Nobility; and that the honour of an order, so highly privileged, cannot be more effectually promoted, than by a return to that truly classical mode which prevailed among the GREAT in the reign of Elizabeth, and produced a manliness of mind, which caused the English character more nearly to resemble the Roman, than at any subsequent period of our history.

I have, therefore, recommended to my noble Scholar, an early and attentive study of the poets, orators, and historians, of ancient Greece and Rome; I have advised him to imitate them in his compositions and eloquence, and to catch their generous spirit, while he emulates the vigour of their style.

Not only talents and superior knowledge are required in hereditary Lawgivers, in men distinguished from their birth by titles, and claiming respect from their cradle, but PUBLIC SPIRIT, generosity, and NOBILITY OF MIND; such as an imitation of the ancients in the purest ages is best adapted to promote. Pensions, places, titles, ribands, and
all

all the mysteries of corruption, were then unknown, and Virtue was Nobility.

Modern meanneſs, mixed with PRIDE FOUNDED IN PEDIGREE ALONE, though traced up to Adam, will be deſpiſed in every country on the face of the earth, once bleſt with light and liberty. The ſun of knowledge is aſcending, and, as it riſes, the miſts of prejudice diſperſe. Viſions, which appeared ſolid and ſubſtantial, when ſeen at a diſtance and through the medium of a fog, now vaniſh into air, and the gaping ſpectator laughs at laſt at his own deluſion.

The ſun of knowledge, high above the horizon, not only gilds the tops of the mountains, but

shines in the low valley. Indeed, the valley is often irradiated with the sunbeams, while the hills are enveloped in mist. A mediocrity of knowledge is diffused throughout all ranks of society; at least an ability and opportunity of obtaining with ease competent information. The lowest of the people can read; and books adapted to the capacity of the lowest of the people, on political and all other subjects, are industriously obtruded on their notice. The newspapers communicate the debates of opposing parties in the senate; and public measures (once confined to a concclave) are now canvassed in the cottage, the manufactory, and the lowest resorts of *plebeian* carousal. Great changes in the public mind are produced by this diffusion; and such changes

changes must produce public innovation. Revolutions, unparalleled in history, have already happened on a large portion of the globe's surface; of which no human foresight can predict the remote consequences. All that wisdom can do, is to render the RISING GENERATION qualified to improve the vicissitudes which may happen, so as to promote the happiness of *man* in society, without partially consulting the exclusive privileges, or the oppressive superiority, of any single order.

Our own country is already a country of liberty. We enjoy, or *may enjoy*, by our happy form of government, as established at the Revolution, that freedom, to obtain which
other

other countries are *convulsed*. We want only a restoration of the primitive principles of our constitution. The old building is strong and venerable, but in part decayed. No honest and independent man will refuse to co-operate in its *repair*. It is not so far dilapidated as to require demolition; but many stones are mouldered, that must be replaced with Purbeck; many timbers rotten, which must be renewed with heart of oak.

They who deny that the parliament wants reform, are of that description of men, who, like some noisome insects, can only subsist in corruption. They feed and fatten in filth, and cleanliness is their bane. And here I cannot but animadvert on those,
who

who stigmatize all who wish to reform the most *manifest* abuses in the constitution of the senate, as its enemies; and would proscribe them under invidious names, basely thrown out to provoke the multitude against them. Who is the best friend of the sick man, the venal practitioner, who treacherously protracts the disorder for the sake of fees, and the lucre of vending his medicines; or the honest and liberal physician, who restores him to health, regardless of his private interest, with all possible expedition? Those calumnies against the best friends of the state, which endeavour to expose them to public resentment, as its enemies, will in time be treated with general indignation. The torrent of self-interest and timidity, rushing on
to.

to the dead lake of despotism, will soon be stemmed by the spirit and vigour of a people, whose history evinces, that however they may be overwhelmed by artifice for a time, they will emerge at last to LIGHT AND LIBERTY. There is in free-born men a NATIVE ELASTICITY, which will throw off every superincumbent weight, not imposed with their own concurrence, or submitted to from conviction of expediency. Coercion, whether from the ruling powers, or from a party or faction among themselves, will not be long borne by a whole people, unless, like the strait-waistcoat to the lunatic, it is necessary, in a morbid state, to their speedy convalescence. But who shall judge of the insanity?—A PARTIAL FEW, interested in the lunatic's confinement?

The

The general voice *will be* one day *clamorous*, though now *overawed* to whispers, for a REFORM OF PARLIAMENT. But when a ~~reform~~ of *parliament* is mentioned, it means not the House of Commons ONLY. The House of Lords must reform itself, by training up *a rising generation of patriots*, with hearts inclined, and understandings enlightened, to pursue and accomplish whatever is best calculated to promote the happiness of a nation, of which they are born legislators. Can he be NOBLE, who in his sordid attention to borough elections, forgets what he owes to his country, what he owes to human nature?

The abolition of Nobility in France naturally excites some degree
of

of alarm in England. The alarm, perhaps, is most concealed by those who feel it most; by those who affect contempt, while they burn with anger. The examples of two empires like America and France, a great portion of the inhabited globe, cannot but operate powerfully on the mind of neighbouring nations; on patri-
cians and on plebeians; on those who fear, and on those who hope. Discussions are already begun on subjects which once were thought, like the Holy of Holies, too sacred to be entered upon by the profane. If the alarm, which has been sounded, be just, the friends of the constitution, and the favourers of Nobility, will labour to render the one pure, and to preserve the other in its degree of due estimation, that they may both be

retained amid the convulsion of neighbouring states ; *retained* inviolate, for their evident utility in promoting the general happiness of man in society, and the welfare of this country. To *prove* their evident value and utility, and to restore them to their native dignity in the PUBLIC ESTEEM, will be to support them better than by levying legions of soldiers. Build them on any other foundation than public conviction of their real use and value, and like the house of the fool founded on the sand, they will one day fall, beaten down by the rains and winds of popular commotion.

To preserve the lustre of Nobility un sullied, is the scope of the following pages. The lower orders of mankind have made wonderful advances

vances in knowledge; I wished the higher to make a proportionable progress, and to preserve a due interval, by a pre-eminence of real excellence; by a Nobility of Virtue and Merit, superadded to the Nobility of Civil Institution.

The times certainly require great wisdom and great virtue in all who take the lead in administration, or in a salutary opposition to it. He, therefore, who recommends to the GREAT the study of models best calculated to form the understanding, and to infuse a taste for that SUBLIME OF PUBLIC VIRTUE which soars above self-interest, is most effectually serving his country; he is sowing the seeds of plants, whose foliage may adorn and shelter the land; he is raising

ing a future generation of HAMPDENS, SIDNEYS, CHATHAMS ; he is providing a succession of LANSDOWNES, FOXES, GREYS, and ERSKINES.

The *noble* stand which these last-mentioned gentlemen have lately made, for the liberty of man, the liberty of thought and speech, and the liberty of the press, on which it must ever depend, retrieves the credit of a venal age, and recalls ideas of Roman magnanimity. The tide of corruption flowed strong and full against them ; but they stood their ground, despising danger, and pitying that weakness of the multitude, which rendered them, during a temporary mania, the dupes of placemen, pensioners, expectants, dealers in boroughs, and factors of corruption.

The encouragement indeed of the late *associations* in every little corner of the kingdom, though apparently adverse, is perhaps, undesignedly, favourable to the cause of liberty. It calls thousands and tens of thousands, in all ranks, from their indolent repose, to the investigation of political subjects. It awakens them to political life, and prompts them to read forbidden books of which they had scarcely heard the names before. It makes them feel their own weight, and will teach them to throw it into the *opposite scale*, when they find themselves deluded by their artful leaders; or when their artful leaders, disappointed in the hopes of reward for their present exertions, shall excite them on some future panic, to associate in opposition. This step may be said in some respect to

to resemble the calling forth the *Notables* in France, and declaring the legislative and executive powers incompetent, without extraneous assistance. Is not this to sap the constitution, or to proclaim its imbecility and decrepitude? And are such *associators friends*, and the *only friends* to their country?

The truth is, that the PEOPLE themselves are at this moment the best friends to the constitution, as consisting of KING, LORDS, and COMMONS: they wanted no associations to threaten them with prosecution; they were loyal from affection and from conviction; and, if any individual violated the law, punishment was certain; for the law retains all its vigour, and justice is administered with the purity of Heaven's tribunal. The

people heard insurrections announced; but they looked, and, lo! all was peace. The insurrections, which were intended to strike a panic, resembled, in the circumstance of their reality, the ghost of Cock-lane, at which the whole nation from one extremity to the other was once unaccountably alarmed. Truth brought her torch; the ghost vanished; and the people laughed at their own credulity!

Men who dare to come forward in the moment of political frenzy, to oppose its extravagance, and to check that intemperate zeal, which, in its fear of republicanism, seems willing to rush into the extreme of despotism, are truly *noble*, and therefore worthy of being pointed out as patterns to the young aspirant at PERSONAL NOBILITY.

LITY. They afford an example of that GREATNESS OF MIND, the only foundation of true grandeur, which the precepts of this book are intended to inspire.

Many enter into opposition as an ADVENTURE; they bring a certain quantity of ability and influence into the market, which is to be bought up, when it appears worth while, by those who possess patronage and the command of a treasury. But men who continue firm in their opposition, in their defence of general liberty, *when their prospect of personal emolument is forlorn*, when reviled by cabals, and when deserted by their adherents, are of that description who founded noble families; themselves, though untitled, the noblest of the human, as

well as of their own, race. The army of Xerxes consisted of myriads ; yet Leonidas comprized, in his firm, united, little band, more true spirit, more genuine Nobility, than the swarms of an oriental despot.

To the *Constitution of England*, to its SPIRIT, which is its essence, those who have thus stood forth are true friends. They have a great stake in the country, though not the stake of places and pensions. They have well-grounded hopes of being rewarded with its honours. They only wish to restore it to its first principles, that they may retard its decay, and build the FINE PILE OF MONARCHY, ARISTOCRACY, AND DEMOCRACY, on *marble* columns, instead of *posts crumbling with putrefaction*.

faction. I avow myself with them, (though the avowal is, I own, unimportant,) a sincere lover of a government so supported; and am happy, however feeble my aid, to cooperate with their generous efforts. I have, with this view, attempted, in the following pages, to add to the personal merit of the *aristocracy*.

If I lean to liberty, I glory in it. I lean to that which every independent mind must love. He who is cordially attached to letters, will probably be attached, with peculiar affection, to liberty; for liberty is the friend of literature, as well as of every thing beautiful and honourable. Tyranny hates it. Tyranny has commonly been ignorant. Tyrants over men, and slaves to their own pas-

sions and caprice, have usually been brought up in *illiterate voluptuousness*; and seem, like the poor savages of some desert isle, to hate letters and sciences, merely because they are strangers to them. Weak eyes shrink from a strong light. But as light is indisputably to be preferred to darkness, so is even democracy to despotism. Ignorant despotism presiding over an enlightened people, is no less ridiculous than detestable; but ignorant it has usually been, and supported merely by brute force, by an ignorant and mercenary army.

The prevalence of *systematic corruption* in a state, is inimical not only to liberty, but to personal merit in every department. It discourages the rising race in their attempts to ex-

cel, when they see the rewards of excellence bestowed only where borough or election influence points out the favoured candidate. When the best emoluments in the church, in the law, in the army, in the navy, are reserved to secure implicit votes in favour of corruption, what is there to stimulate to high excellence in the liberal professions, but the pure love of excellence for its own sake, which operates only on a few of *nobler* dispositions than are possessed by the generality? What is there to cherish in the state that *root of Nobility*, from which the branches, which now flourish from its vigour, chiefly derive their bloom and fruit? And is it not a fact too notorious to be controverted, that besides the public purse, all the *douceurs* in all the professions are scarcely

scarcely sufficient, in our unreformed state, to satisfy the cravings of voracious corruption?

But though a senatorial reform is most devoutly to be wished, yet the unreformed state is to be preferred, with all its evils, to continued violence, rapine, bloodshed, and universal confusion. Let REASON, not force, triumph. Though her conquest over prejudice be slow and gradual, it is ultimately sure. The TREE OF LIBERTY is planted already in England. May the mossy concretions be rubbed off its branches, and the thorns and briars removed which impede its vegetation! I would plant by its side the TREE OF PEACE, the fruitful olive. May they both flourish together, watered by the dew of Heaven, comforting

comforting the people with their shade, and enriching them to their heart's content by an abundant fertility!

Peace is the chief good of a commercial, and indeed of every people. European nations, with all their improvements in civilization, are still too near the savage state, while they terminate their contests by war. Nothing but self-defence can justify it. And if those who decree that it shall take place, under any circumstances but the necessity of self-defence, were compelled to go into the field in person, it is probable that national disputes would be settled by the arbitration of neutral powers, and the sword converted into the ploughshare. / To avoid war, the forest calamity

lamiety of human nature, should be the chief object of every humane man, and wise minister. If war at all times is to be shunned, it is more particularly at this time, when ill success may probably cause that anarchy and confusion, which has yet existed among us in idea only. When taxes shall be still further increased, and the national credit reduced, many, it is to be feared, will desert the standard to which they have lately crept with blind servility, and *rally* round THE TORCH OF DISCORD.

True patriotism, such as, regardless of party, and of all selfish views, contemplates events, in which the happiness of a future generation may be endangered, and by which THE HAPPINESS OF THE LIVING RACE MUST

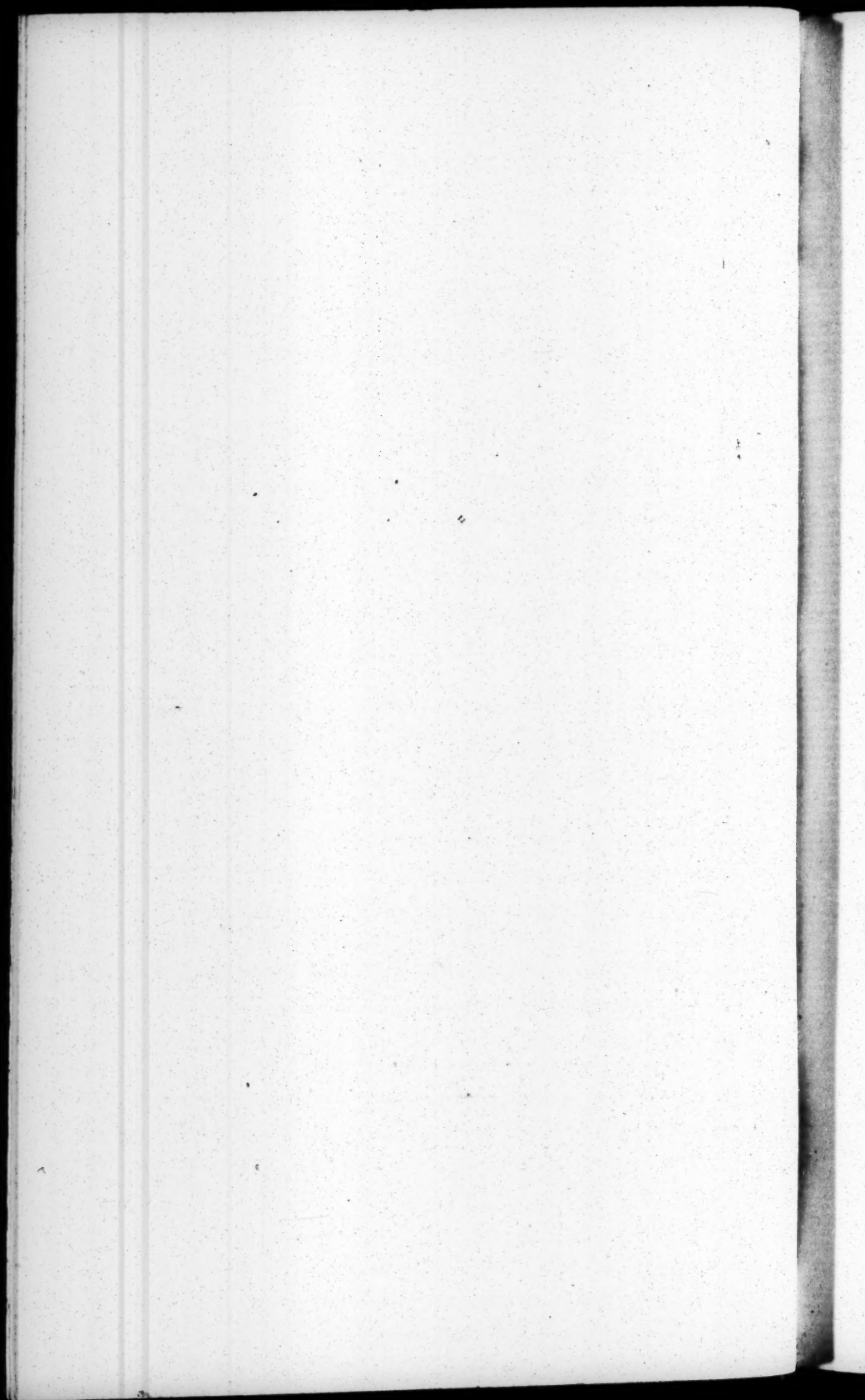
MUST BE DESTROYED, will labour to avoid war, by which nothing really valuable can be gained, and every thing may be lost. It will not sacrifice internal happiness like ours to punctilio. It will not wantonly interfere in the concerns of foreign nations. It will not gratify even national pride at the expence of national felicity. To excite such patriotism, I have endeavoured to form a virtuous Patri-
cian, whose mind is enlarged by the most valuable knowledge, and whose heart is softened by religion and humanity; whose spirit is no less elevated above the ordinary level of mankind, than his civil rank in society. The moral architect who builds a man—great from internal qualities—good at heart—meaning nothing but what is generous and beneficent,

nescent, and able to accomplish his purposes—is surely as well employed as he who forms a heap of stones into a palace, beautiful in its symmetry, magnificent in its size. As mind is superior to matter, so is a really great man more noble than the sublimest inanimate productions of art or of nature. To be the humblest labourer in erecting such an edifice, is an honourable employment.

If zeal in a good cause has led to any ardor of expression, I trust I shall need no pardon. I have no fordid interest to serve in what I have done. I have not been obsequious to power. I have nothing to ask of it, nothing to expect from it, and from the candid judgment of the public I have nothing to fear. I have employed

my literary leisure in a way that I thought might be useful; and if one idea only is serviceable to the country, it will be acknowledged as meritorious, when the temporary prejudices of party shall be lost in the radiance of eternal truth.

I am attached to the King and to the Lords; but I am more attached to the *Commons*; and I will adopt the saying of Rumbald in the reign of Charles the Second, as recorded by Burnet: "I do not imagine the Almighty intended, that THE GREATEST PART OF MANKIND should come into the world with saddles on their backs and bridles in their mouths, and a FEW ready booted and spurred to ride the rest to death."



PERSONAL NOBILITY:

OR,

L E T T E R S

TO A

YOUNG NOBLEMAN.

L E T T E R I.

MY LORD,

I Congratulate you on your determination to adorn the lustre of your birth by the accomplishments of elegant literature. The eagerness with which you solicit my correspondence is a compliment to me, and a proof of your own ardour in the pursuit of improvement. You need not doubt my
B compli-

compliance. It will be a pleasing amusement in my retreat, to contribute to the embellishment of a mind like yours; no less ennobled by a disposition to every generous virtue, than by a long line of illustrious ancestors.

You have already made, under your excellent tutor, an uncommon proficiency in those grammatical and elementary studies, which, however unostentatious in their appearance, are necessary to form a solid basis for a durable and beautiful superstructure. Proceed in your conquests; but take care to preserve the territory already subdued. Be not afraid of literary labour. At your age, you have health and strength enough to support a
great

great deal, without the least detriment to your constitution, and with a certainty of pleasure and profit in return.

I admire that prudence which induces you to employ the valuable years of youth in useful and honourable studies, rather than in frivolous occupations; such as too often engross the minds of young men at your age, and in your elevated station. But forgive the caution of a friend. I dread the effects of example. Can you withstand the shafts of ridicule? For though your conduct will be esteemed by all men of sense and virtue, yet it will be derided by fops, gamblers, and professed men of pleasure.

Arm yourself, my Lord, with all your manly resolution on first entering into life. Your sense and accomplishments, seconded by courage in steadily pursuing the right path which you have chosen, will awe the weak and the vain to silence; and, in time, convert their contempt into esteem.

In the mean while, your sun will be rising gloriously in the horizon; and their feeble luminaries declining in clouds and darkness, to rise no more. You will soon become an important character, while they are sinking into insignificance. Your birth and fortune will indeed give you *civil rank*; but your attainments and your conduct will give you, what is better, the weight of personal

personal authority. Both united must render you, what every Nobleman should ambitiously desire to be, an ornament to your country and to human nature.

But I know your liberal spirit, and trust to it. You want not the exhortations which my zeal has suggested. You have often expressed your scorn of being indebted to accidental nobility alone for personal distinction. May the ardour of virtue which irradiates the morning of your life, glow intensely at its noon, and add warmth and lustre to its evening! Thus while you live, you will be honoured; and at that day, when all human grandeur must be levelled to the earth, adorned with a better ornament than an escutcheon.

Forgive the zeal of friendship even when intemperate. My future letters shall be principally on subjects of polite literature, useful science, or the means of supporting the true dignity of a British Nobleman.

I may indeed touch on POLITICS; for they are the peculiar study of a British Peer. But my politics are not the politics of a faction or a venal court. They are the politics of philanthropy. The solid happiness of all human creatures, high as well as low, and low as well as high, is their object. To that happiness CIVIL LIBERTY is essential. I mean liberty restrained by reason, by humanity, by justice, by a love of peace and a love of order.

I am, &c.

LETTER II.

MY LORD,

You desire me to give you an account, both critical and biographical, of the ancient classics. It would be easy to do it; for the materials are redundantly copious. But it has been done so often, that the task becomes irksome from repetition.

Give me leave to refer you for information to the lives usually prefixed to the editions of the classics, Greek and Latin, to Fabricius's *Bibliotheca*; to Kennet's *Lives of the Greek Poets*; to Crusius's, of the Latin; and to Spence's *Polymetis*.

The minds of the first restorers of learning were so captivated with the beauties of the ancients, that they directed their whole labour and learning to their illustration. The consequence is, a mass of materials which has been accumulating to this hour; and which has a tendency to satiate by its copiousness, and to disgust by its perpetual similarity.

It is certainly right to acquaint yourself with the life, manners, and character of an ancient or a modern author, if practicable, before you undertake to read him. But I advise you not to dwell, as many have done, upon preliminary discourses and marginal notes, so much, as to leave little time and attention for the composition itself, the grand object of all; by which
alone

alone the author has survived the wreck of time, and for which alone it is thought worth while to enquire into his history, to write comments on him, or to introduce him to notice with prefatory dissertation.

From those books which I have already mentioned, you will derive as much knowledge as you will require in this department; unless you should make literary history a favourite and peculiar study. It is indeed a very entertaining study; and in the course of correspondence, I may sometimes take the liberty of giving you some hints upon it. But I think you may acquire all the biographical knowledge of the old classics, which you will at present want, from an occasional inspection
of

of the obvious authors whom I have recommended. Indeed I have no great pleasure in mere translation; or in transcription; and I am unwilling to offer a dish to your Lordship, which has been so often hashed in every mode, that the most ingenious cookery can scarcely give it a new flavour.

So much has been done in the illustration of the classics, that little room is left for useful addition. Our forefathers have cleared the country, and levelled and illuminated the roads; but let not the facility of travelling unnerve our resolution, or lull us to an indolent and inglorious repose.

I am, &c.

LETTER III.

MY LORD,

As a vague and desultory study in youth contributes chiefly to amusement, I must intreat you to avoid the habit of it at present, and to form a plan and fix a scope.

It is, my Lord, your duty to be a *politician*. But I wish you to be a politician in the most extensive sense: one who sincerely loves his country, understands its real interest, and has judgment and spirit to promote it. Under the idea of a politician, in your Lordship's rank and station, I comprehend

prehend the knowledge and the liberality of a true philosopher.

Your desire, you tell me, is, to lead an honourable life, adorned with the lights of learning; to attain a pure and elegant style in writing and conversation, and a commanding eloquence in the senate.

Let this then be your scope; and let all your efforts in study have a reference to it. The character is so great at which you aspire, that there is scarcely any part of science and polite learning, which is not in some degree conducive to it.

But the multitude of objects which requires your attention, renders it necessary to form something of a plan.

I do

I do not mean a strict and inflexible rule, which tends rather to shackle, than to facilitate the movements of the mind; but I mean such a system of application, as may guide without painful restraint, and govern steadily, yet without the severity of unrelaxing despotism.

A thousand circumstances must arise, which may render a temporary deviation from a plan of study, far more conducive to the end, than an inviolable adherence to it. Throughout life we are often governed by unavoidable circumstances; and he that would conduct himself entirely by rule in little as well as great matters, must retreat from society; must live alone in the world, and out of the reach of its wonderful vicissitudes.

A plan

A plan of study is chiefly useful in pointing out a return to the right way, after we have been forced by circumstances to desert it. It may be compared to a great turnpike-road leading to the place of the traveller's destination. He may frequently find out a shorter, or a pleasanter path; but he is in no danger of losing himself, while he keeps in view the highway, proceeds in a line nearly parallel, and knows how to return to it when danger or difficulties occur.

Many severe students in the universities have prescribed to themselves a plan of study, in which the business of every hour of the day has been scrupulously allotted. But I never heard that they arrived at any great superiority over those who allowed them-

themselves a little latitude. The mind, especially when enlivened by genius, loves its liberty; and roves with delight, like the bee, in search of flowers of its own undirected choice.

I suspect, my Lord, that they knew but little of the human mind, who supposed it capable of making a successful transition from one study to another, during eight or ten hours of the day, by the sound of the clock. I am of opinion that the abrupt dereliction of a subject, in which the attention is deeply engaged, to enter on another directed by a written plan, would often be found no less injurious than unpleasant.

Indeed,

Indeed, though many have begun to study in the trammels of severe method; yet few, I believe, have continued it long, or felt it on experience beneficial.

What is done well, is usually done with pleasure, and from choice. Restraint is in its nature irksome to the free-born mind. It is only to be imposed where the utility compensates the pain. I shall therefore never recommend it to you when it is unnecessary. Obey the impulse of the moment, even if the object to which it leads is but collaterally connected with your principal scope.

You perceive, therefore, that the plan which I advise is liberal.

A

I hope

I hope that you will find it agreeable; and, without unnecessary pain in the pursuit, arrive at the excellence you desire.

I am, &c.

LETTERS TO A

LETTER IV.

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship expressed a wish in your last letter, that I would be more explicit on the plan which I advised you to pursue. I am happy in finding you desirous of information, and wish it may be in my power to offer such as you may experience to be truly useful.

I think it right, my Lord, to lay the foundation of your future improvements, in that kind of elegant and pleasing learning, which the French call the *Belles Lettres*; the

2 English,

English, classical learning; and the Ancients, the *studies of humanity*. You have already made a very considerable progress in this department under your tutor. But it must be confessed, that you have read the classics hitherto, rather for the sake of acquiring the ancient languages, and exemplifying the rules of grammar, than of refining your taste, and of extending your knowledge of life and manners.

You will do right to re-peruse the most celebrated of the classics with more liberal views. Procure the best *variorum* editions of them all, for the sake of referring to them when difficulties arise. Begin with Virgil, and read him in the edition of HEYNE. Do not trouble yourself at first with

the *variantes lectiones*, nor with all those discourses which the ingenious editor entitles *excursus*; but read all his notes at the bottom of the pages. They will give you a just idea of Virgil's excellence, in many passages where the beauties may at first not strike your taste. Finish all the works of Virgil, before you enter on any other classic. You will soon read him with interest; which is seldom the case when a classic is read chiefly to analyse the construction, in short interrupted portions, as at school, or under a private tutor.

From thus studying and relishing Virgil, you will receive an improvement in your taste, which will enable you to discover those charms which captivate the classical reader in all the

celebrated authors of the Augustan age.

Let Homer's Iliad be read immediately after Virgil's Æneis. Read him without notes; for no author writes more perspicuously, and notes only distract attention when they are not necessary. Read him in the Oxford edition, without a Latin translation; having at the same time, in a separate volume, a Latin translation to refer to occasionally; and to save the trouble of turning over a lexicon. After a careful reading of the two or three first books, you will find little difficulty in the language. The few that may arise, will be easily removed by the translation. I wish you could proceed entirely without a translation; but as this is more

perhaps than I ought reasonably to expect, I recommend one, merely to avoid the toil of turning over the lexicon. Not that I think the toil useless; but I fear it will be more troublesome than you will chuse to submit to, especially as editions with literal translations abound, in which the meaning of every word is accurately discovered with little labour.

By an attentive perusal of Virgil and Homer, you will not only have acquired a perfect acquaintance with those first-rate writers, but at the same time a great knowledge of mythology, and of that poetical history which tends to facilitate the study of the classics of all ages and all countries. Other authors
are

are to be read indeed in due order, but Virgil and Homer should be first digested. They will furnish a solid corner-stone for the future edifice, however massy or magnificent the design. Not to weary or alarm you with requiring too much at once, I shall pursue the subject in subsequent letters, if, amid your other employments, you deem what I have already proposed, not impracticable.

But lest you should think that I have lost sight of the plan of which I spoke, I must remind you that the Belles Lettres constitute the first part of it. It will be followed by logic, ethics, metaphysics, physics, mathematics, history, philosophy, and general literature.

I am, &c.

LETTER V.

MY LORD,

THE authors whom, at this period of your studies, I next recommend to your most attentive re-perusal are, Horace, Cicero, and Demosthenes. Chuse Baxter's edition of Horace, with the improvements of Gesner. The notes are short; but so much the better, since they are in a high degree ingenious, learned, and illustrative. I know you have read Horace, as well as Virgil and Homer, under your tutor; but read him again, in this your recapitulating and voluntary course. He is the poet of gentlemen,

men, and men of the world. You cannot read and taste his beauties, without improving your *urbanity* of manners, together with your knowledge of polite literature.

The notes, commentaries, and illustrations of this most favourite author are, beyond all reasonable limits, voluminous. They would of themselves fill a large library. But, my Lord, you have not time to read like a Burman and a Bentley; and I am not sure that you ought to lament it. The wheat which is to be found in the store-houses of such laborious scholars, is accompanied with abundance of chaff. They had great merit, and it is uncandid to detract from it. All I contend for is, and I conjecture it is not very necessary to contend eagerly,

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eagerly, that your Lordship should not devote much of your time to the reading of their dull notes. If you can understand and taste your author without them, it is enough; and I have no doubt but that you may understand Horace with Gesner, assisted occasionally by the Dauphin edition; and that you will taste him by your own discernment, and the observations you have already made on men and manners. Horace may be read rather as an amusement, than as a serious study. You may carry a little pocket edition about you, and read him at those intervals which no parsimony of time can ever preclude. Many a quarter of an hour passes tediously and unprofitably, which might be pleasantly and usefully employed in studying those elegant pieces

pieces which charmed a Mæcenas and an Augustus. There are editions of Horace that will take up less room in your pocket, than your morocco pocket-book and almanack.

But give me leave to lead you to a higher order. I feel a sentiment of reverence at the name of Cicero, and I wish to inspire you with the same. My Lord, he is a model, almost perfect, for an English nobleman. Before you enter upon his works, read his Life by Middleton; and dwell with particular attention on the last section of it, which delineates his character. Middleton himself is an excellent writer; formed on the style of him whose life he has exhibited. Detraction has indeed robbed Middleton of some of his honours,

honours, by denying the originality of his choice of citations; but whether this is well or ill founded, it very little affects the merit of his style as a classical composer.

I almost fear to recommend to your Lordship, the perusal of all that remains of Cicero, lest you should be dismayed at the nine quartos of Olivet. But yet I will venture to advise it, because I am convinced that it will be in the highest degree ornamental to your mind. It is true that some parts of Cicero, as well as of all other authors, are more worthy of your attention than others. His Book of Offices, and his Treatises on Old Age, on Friendship; his Dialogue on the Orator, his Brutus, his Orator, and his Letters, deserve to be
made

made the companions of a student's life. They certainly contain the best sentiments of the human heart, in the best expressions of style and language.

I shall reserve the subject of his Orations, and my recommendation of Demosthenes, to a future letter.

I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

MY LORD,

I AM aware that those who have assumed the office of recommending books to students, have erred greatly by exceeding all reasonable limits in the number which they have recommended. I am afraid you will begin to suspect that I shall fall into a similar mistake.

But, my Lord, I desire you to remember, through the whole of our correspondence, that I prescribe no rule of study, which may not be corrected and altered by those emergent circum-

circumstances which it is not possible to foresee.

From the great number of books which I must of necessity mention with praise, you will read only such as your time, well managed, will enable you; you will select such parts of them as your own judgment shall point out as most useful and conducive to your purpose; or such as shall please your taste, and accord with your inclination.

When your inclination leans strongly to any author, read on, regardless of a plan; for whatever you read with appetite, will turn, like food, to solid nourishment. Besides, the pleasure of following inclination, in matters

ters not of the first moment, is a reason sufficient for complying with it.

Though the necessary modes of grammatical expression may lead me to speak in the imperative mood, yet I shall never assume the right of dictation. Your age and your parts justify you in thinking for yourself. I submit to you my ideas on the subject of your studies, at your own request, and with a desire to promote the purposes of an ingenuous and virtuous mind like yours; but it will give me pleasure to find you improving and altering them, according to the suggestions of your own good sense, guided by emergencies and the opinions of others with whom you may converse.

Your

Your situation in life requires action as well as contemplation. I do not wish to render you a walking library, a verbal critic, or a mere grammarian. But, in general, there is little danger of excess on the side of application to study. So many and powerful are the temptations to frivolity, that the danger is, lest it should engross the mind, and preclude all attention to books, and all learning, useful and ornamental. I know your love of letters is ardent; but, at first entering into the world of fashion, there is reason to fear, that your earlier propensities may be superseded by others less laudable.

You will allow me therefore to prescribe such conduct and such studies, as I think best, and most conducive

ducive to your honour and happiness. If I recommend too much of any thing, attribute it to my anxiety for your welfare; but not to my ignorance of the difficulty you will be under, of doing or reading all that I may mention as worthy your attention and endeavour.

At the same time that I am ready to make all due allowance, and grant many indulgences; I cannot refrain from reminding you, that every man, especially every young and healthy man, like yourself, is able to read much more, than in the hour of timidity and indolence he is apt to imagine. To the persevering spirit of manly virtue and youthful ambition, there is scarcely any height which is too arduous for attainment.

Be

Be of good courage ; and remember that by aiming at great things, you will certainly obtain much, though not all at which you aspire. How much wiser and nobler, than to shrink from the pursuit entirely, through a despair of reaching the highest pinnacle !

I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

MY LORD,

I Reserved the subject of Cicero's Orations for a particular Letter; because I consider all that is connected with oratory as particularly important to you, who intend not to pass your life in an ignominious ease, but in the pursuit of real honour, and the service of your country. You will soon be a member of the senate; and your friends will naturally expect to see the fruits of your study and genius richly displayed in parliamentary eloquence.

The world cannot afford you a better model than Cicero. But to receive all the benefit from his orations

tions which they are able to afford, you must read them, not merely as a critic and grammarian, but with a particular view to improvement in oratory. You must enter into their spirit, be present at the scenes which occasioned them, analyse their method, and weigh their arguments in the scales of reason.

Begin with the oration for Milo. It is generally allowed to be one of the best; and as you may not have time to read all, it is advisable, in the first instance, to secure an acquaintance with the most approved. You may indeed read the whole of the selection made for the use of the Dauphin, previously to any of the others; for to reject that, or any other common books, merely because

they are common, is a proof of affectation and foolish conceit, rather than of good sense. I confess that the edition for the use of the Dauphin, is not in much esteem among the learned, and that it is calculated chiefly for learners; but it is an useful selection, and may very properly be read by you, as an introduction to the other orations. You will sometimes find a difficult passage, which the notes in this edition will usually illustrate. If they should not, pass it over, and read on without interruption. The difficulty will probably vanish at a second reading; or it may be removed by the assistance of an intelligent friend. At all events, let it not impede your progress, or cool the glow of animation which you may have caught, and which will

will conduce more to your improvement in eloquence, than the notes of all the commentators.

Though I wish you to make the works of Cicero your particular study, yet I cannot advise you to trouble yourself with more notes than those which are indispensably necessary to illustrate allusions to historical facts, to ancient laws, and to local practices and customs. The *Clavis Ciceroniana* of *Ernestus*, which you may procure in a separate octavo volume, will answer your purpose entirely. Let it always be at hand while you read Cicero. It is printed in the last volume of the Oxford edition; but it is cumbrous in a quarto size, and the labour of investigating words in an index, is sufficiently irksome, with-

out the additional incumbrance of an unwieldy volume. You will remember at the same time, that I do not interdict your reading of any notes, if you should have time, and should take a pleasure in the learning and ingenuity which they often display. All I mean is, to express my opinion of the impropriety of diverting the attention which is due to an author, and which such authors as Cicero will amply reward, from the valuable text to the annotations, which are often of dubious authority, and expressed in dubious Latin. It has been justly observed, that many a celebrated *antient author*, furrounded by a vast accumulation of comments, is scarcely seen, and resembles a little boat in the wide ocean, or a jewel lost in a dunghill. I wish, my
Lord,

Lord, to bring forward the *author himself* to your notice, to impress his words strongly on your mind, to tinge you with the colour of his style, and to work his sentiments into your bosom. Shall Grævius and Burmannus overwhelm Cicero in the mind of the reader, even while they are undertaking to illustrate him? Read the text, and trust, while you read, to your own understanding. Grapple with your author by the exertions of your native vigour. Dare to enter the temple at once, without lingering in the porch. Life is too short, to spend any time in superfluous preparation.

I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

MY LORD,

OF the great number of Orations which Cicero delivered, fifty-nine are extant at this day; a number sufficient to furnish ample employment for the most diligent student of modern eloquence.

But I repeat my advice, that you should first read the best of them, and leave those which are not above mediocrity, or which at least are less celebrated than others, to the contingency of a future occasion. I have already recommended

mended the Oration for Milo. You will read all that are contained in the Dauphin selection. But you will not be satisfied without reading that for Aulus Cluentius. In other orations, Cicero is said to have out-done others; in this, himself. The seven Harangues on the famous business of Verres, and the fourteen against Anthony, will of course excite, as they will richly reward, your attention.

When you shall have read all these, with the assistance of Ernestus's indexes, I think you may be congratulated on your acquaintance with one of the greatest speakers and best men whom antiquity has produced. You will want no farther directions for the study of Cicero. You will have contracted

an esteem for the man, notwithstanding his modern detractors, and a taste for his works, however neglected. You will, without my instigation, read the rest of his harangues at your leisure and from choice. Your improvement will infallibly be great and secure. Quintilian, a most judicious writer, has asserted, as you may remember, that he who is delighted with Cicero, may depend upon it, that he has made no small proficiency in the study of eloquence.

I know it has been the fashion to detract both from the moral and the literary character of Cicero : and indeed neither his life nor his writings are without the characteristics of humanity. He was sometimes too timid in his conduct,

conduct, and too diffuse in his style. But, my Lord, his excellencies predominate in a more than common proportion; and his detractors have had chiefly in view, the attainment of distinction for themselves, by singularity of opinion, and the gratification of their pride, by pretensions to superior sagacity.

I am, &c.

LETTER IX.

MY LORD,

As oratory is very properly the object of your present studies, I must conduct you from Cicero to Demosthenes. You have Greek enough to read him, with very little assistance either from lexicons or translations. Condescend to resume, during your earlier studies, the edition which you used under your tutor. I think it was Mounteney's; in which, though there are but few orations, there are enough to give an appetite for more, and to lead you to the edition of Taylor.

Every

Every common-place critic talks of the vehemence of Demosthenes; but vehemence alone is a slight commendation of oratory. Vehemence is the quality which marks the rhetoric of a scold. You may hear it in great perfection in the streets and the market-places. The peculiar excellence of Demosthenes is a solidity of reasoning, expressed with a force of style; and both united, command assent and conviction. He fights with a weapon at once sharp, polished, and massy. It cuts like a two-edged sword, and falls with the force of a battle-axe. I will not however enter into a general encomium of an author whom all commend, and who is now seated in such eminent rank, that praise can no longer

longer aggrandize, nor dispraise depreciate, his character.

But his beauties are not of that sort which display themselves on a cursory perusal. His solid ore must be dug for with persevering labour. I do not mean that his subject-matter is difficult of comprehension, for it was addressed to the lowest of the people; but the excellence of his diction cannot be understood by a *modern*, who is unacquainted with the curious art of the ancients, in the formation of their style. The nicety with which they examined the structure of sentences, exceeds all that the moderns ever attempted in studying the beauties of composition. Perhaps the inharmo-
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nious languages of the moderns cannot easily admit of it.

I do not desire you at present to enter into the minute enquiries of a critical anatomist. But you will not taste the style of Demosthenes, till you shall have formed an idea of the ancient rhythmus, and tuned your ear to the finished periods of an Athenian orator.

I know not how this can be better effected, than by habituating yourself to pronounce aloud, whole paragraphs from the orations of Demosthenes, with all the fire and animation which you will feel from warmly entering into the cause. Pronounce them repeatedly in your study, till you perceive the full
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force and harmony of every period. Imitate the musician who practises a new piece of music till he discovers its excellence; not desponding because at first it presents nothing but discord, but persevering till he catches the very spirit and idea of the composer.

When you have discovered the proper pauses or *caesuræ*, mark them with your pencil. Then observe how one part of a period corresponds with the other in beautiful proportion. You will thus not only feel the pleasure of his fine style, but see the cause of it, and become at once a judge and an artist. You will find that every word has its place, like the stones in a beautiful piece of architecture; from which, if it should be removed,

removed, the symmetry will be deranged, and the graceful result of the whole diminished or destroyed. Observe the same method in reading all authors who excel in style.

Read aloud, observing the rhythm, and the close of every sentence. Let the groves of your father's park resound with Roman and Athenian eloquence; nor be afraid of disturbing the Dryads. The young men who make a figure nowhere but in the chace, at the gaming-table, and over the bottle, may call you mad, if they should overhear you; but time will discover that you were hunting nobler game than they know how to pursue. What figure will *they* make in the house of lords, when every

peer

peer shall be hanging on your lips, and admiring in you, the sound philosopher, the intelligent statesman, and the nervous orator?

I have before hinted, that you must be well armed against the assaults of ridicule, if you aspire at uncommon excellence. The *knowing young men* have no weapon to assail you but ridicule.

I am, &c.

LETTER X.

MY LORD,

AFTER you shall have repeatedly read, marking the pauses, examining the rhythmus, and pronouncing aloud, at least a hundred times over, the few orations of Demosthenes which Mounteney has edited; I would put into your hands, as a convenient book, the edition of Lucchesini, published in London by Allen. Go through it, in the same manner as you went through Mounteney's. You will indeed find the same orations inserted in it, as in Mounteney's; but you will also find seven

or eight additional. Read them all. Pronounce them all with the strictest attention to time, and to those marks of your pencil, which I recommended before, and which I compare to bars, or to rests, in your music-books.

Your ear will now be formed, and you will chuse to proceed, for the pleasure of the progress, to the oration for Ctesiphon, published with the speech of Æschines against him, in the edition of Foulkes and Friend. You will be delighted with that celebrated contest. The oration of Æschines is admirable. How much more so, that of Demosthenes, which defeated it entirely, I hope your cultivated taste will now immediately perceive. Pay particular attention

tention to the oration against Midias ; for it is universally acknowledged to be a master-piece.

On this topic I need not urge you any farther. You will eagerly purchase Taylor's Demosthenes, which, though left imperfect, is well worthy of your possession ; and I think you will not rest satisfied without the edition of Wolfius, in three volumes in folio. Be not alarmed ; I do not mean that you should read all the Orations ; but I think you will chuse to have them all in your collection, that you may refer to them as occasion or inclination may require.

In your letter, which I have just received, you mention Leland's translation of Demosthenes, and slightly
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hint, that you have read a few orations in it, without being impressed with that exalted idea of the original, which I have endeavoured to inspire.

To detract from established fame is invidious. Dr. Leland was a valuable man, and a good writer; but his translation of Demosthenes appears to be a feeble performance. I do not say that the meaning is not faithfully preserved; but I am of opinion, that the force and animation of the original style are not attained. Take care not to form your idea of authors from translations only. As to Leland, you may use his work by way of comment, where difficulties arise; or you may usefully run over
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an oration in English, previously to reading it in Greek, in order to obtain, at an easy rate, introductory knowledge of the subject and the method. But I must apprise you that there is danger, when once you begin to use a translation, of never desisting from its use. It is a powerful allurement to the indulgence of indolence; and how many apparent students are deceived by that siren; and listening to her voice, lose all their habits of industry, and with them all hope and chance of great improvement and intellectual pleasure!

I am, &c.

LETTER XI.

MY LORD,

YOUR chief object in reading Demosthenes, is not merely a better acquaintance with the Greek language, but improvement in eloquence; by catching his fire, and imitating the force of his style and the strength of his reasoning, in your own future orations. Your principal attention is therefore to be paid to him as a fine writer, and a model of eloquence. But it is absolutely necessary to understand him fully as you proceed; and for this purpose, you must often have recourse to
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collateral and auxiliary information. Though clear and perspicuous in his style, yet in historical allusions, and legal practices, or customs, he cannot be completely understood without a commentator, or a perfect knowledge of the history of Athens during the short period of his political activity.

The perusal of the *argument* prefixed to every oration, will usually throw sufficient light upon it, to enable you to proceed with pleasure. But you will sometimes find it necessary to examine the *Latin* notes subjoined to Mounteney's, and those also in the second volume of Allen's edition. But never turn to them, unless when you cannot proceed without them. Many of Taylor's notes respect the
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state of the text, the different readings, the errors of copyists, with which, at present, you have no occasion to trouble yourself, since your object is not verbal criticism; but style, method, and argumentation. While you are glowing with the fire of Demosthenes, I should lament to see you benumbed, on a sudden, with a long account of various readings in a dozen manuscripts or printed copies. The other notes of that learned editor are well worth your attentive perusal.

You will read the Grecian history of the period at which your author flourished with peculiar attention. Add to it, the Life of Philip. And, if you have leisure, you may also
have

have recourse to Turreil's celebrated French translation.

The valuable and curious account of Demosthenes, prefixed to the edition of Wolfius as a preface, will give you a complete idea of the character of Demosthenes, as it was conceived by the best judges of antiquity. And I refer you to it as to the fountain-head of intelligence concerning Demosthenes, whence the moderns have chiefly derived those streams which they have abundantly diffused. There is, you will observe, a great deal to be read; but indeed it is worth the labour; for it contains much elegant and very interesting erudition.

I am, &c.

LETTER XII.

MY LORD,

ONE of your first objects, I have already said, is the study of rhetoric; but not by dry rules and technical terms. You study, a voluntary scholar, under such tutors as Demosthenes and Cicero. They have set you patterns; and you are to follow them not servilely, but with a generous emulation to reach their excellence in your own language, and to naturalize their beauty in your own country. *Practice* then, will promote your purpose far better than

than theory. Theory enough you will derive from an assiduous study of those orators, from whom the rhetoricians formed their rules; often giving the hard name of a figure, and the pompous appearance of art, to modes of thinking, and to forms of utterance, which were plainly the result of common sense, the sentiments and the language of nature.

The *practice*, or exercise, which I recommend, must consist of daily composition, and frequent recitation.

Chuse any of the common topics of political or judicial debate, which may be agitated in England at the time you are exercising; and compose a speech with as much accuracy and resemblance

blance to your model, Cicero or Demosthenes, as you are able. Compose not indolently, but with the utmost exertion of your genius. Endeavour to feel and think, just as if you were speaking at the bar, or in parliament, while all around you is wrapt in silence. I know there is some difficulty in working up your mind to such a pitch in the solitude of your library. But the power of a warm and lively imagination can overcome the difficulty. When you shall have written your harangue, speak it with all the vehemence, pathos, or elegant modulation, which the nature of the subject will admit. Write every day, and recite at least two or three times in the week, with the most earnest endeavours to excel.

My Lord, I do really believe, that a student may pore over the best *treatises of rhetoric* for seven years; and at last come forth as silent as a statue; while you, in this mode, that of *imitating the best models*, will be able in a little time, to speak well on every topic which may come properly before you.

But when I advise your Lordship to cultivate oratory by practice rather than by rule, I do not mean to insinuate, that you must sit down in total ignorance of what the rhetoricians have been teaching mankind with so much parade. I earnestly recommend to you the reading of select parts of Quintilian. The
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whole of Rollin's edition will not, I think, be more than you may read with pleasure. Of this favourite author I shall say more in my next letter.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XIII.

MY LORD,

So numerous have been the writers on the art of speaking, that, I dare say, a thousand books of rhetoric, of various kinds, and in various languages, might be recommended to your notice. If you can find time, you will receive much improvement from *Schellerus's Præcepta Styli bene Latini*. But I have pointed out a shorter way; and am sure you will think it a pleasanter. Whether it will be equally or more successful, depends upon your own ardour and perseverance.

But I recommended Quintilian; he is indeed a most excellent writer, and worthy of your study, for his goodness of heart, and his general good sense, independently of his instruction as a master of rhetoric.

As a master of rhetoric, he is the best qualified of any I know, to introduce you to a knowledge of the excellencies of Cicero and Demosthenes.

Always fearful of requiring too much, I do not recommend the whole of Quintilian's work, as it appears in the elaborate edition of Capponnerius. That excellent didactic author, Rollin, has published a most agreeable abridgment. Procure a small Paris edition, to carry in your pocket.

pocket. Contract an intimacy with Quintilian, and I will engage that you will love him as a friend, while you respect him as an instructor. From a frequent conversation with him, you will improve in good sense and sound reasoning, in taste, and in the art of just criticism.

He is sometimes a little difficult; but Rollin generally removes the difficulty, by short well-chosen notes, which afford much light, without consuming much time.

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If I should tell you how greatly I admire Quintilian, you would attribute my praises to the prejudice of an unreasonable partiality. I have long made him my companion; and

I know no author in *didactics* that equals the merit of Quintilian. If you anxiously desire improvement, read Quintilian repeatedly. I am sure I cannot give you better advice for the conduct of your studies in eloquence, after having endeavoured to secure your first attention to the great models, Cicero and Demosthenes. However paradoxical it may seem, I wish you to contemplate the great works of genius, before you study the minute rules of art; and to feel as nature dictates, before your ardour is cooled by technical theory.

You may wonder, perhaps, that I do not recommend the rhetoric of Aristotle. I leave it to your future studies, and to your own option. Aristotle wrote in a manner so dry
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and jejune, as disgusts and deters a young reader. I am far from meaning to detract from him; for I consider him as one who understood human nature better than most of the sons of Adam; and who derives the instructions he gives, from the study of man, and the anatomy of the heart. But he requires a reader of mature judgment, and that degree of improvement already obtained, which it is the business of a didactic author to produce.

The rhetorical books of Cicero are also, like those of Aristotle, better adapted to the manly than the juvenile age; because they are in subtle dialogues; where erroneous opinions are maintained by some of the interlocutors with such ingenuity,

as may deceive and mislead a young student, whose judgment is not confirmed by experience and reflection. They are however polite conferences; and well worthy of your perusal, for the elegance of their language, the urbanity of their manners, and the generosity of their sentiments. But the rhetorical instruction in them is too widely diffused, to be easily reduced to a clear and systematic form. It is justly observed by Rollin, that Quintilian unites the beauties of Cicero and Aristotle, without their abstruseness. He adorns the subtlety of the *Stagyrite*, by introducing the flowers of Ciceronian eloquence; and while he entertains the young student with the charms of his style, he exercises the abilities of the profoundest scholar, by the solidity of his sense.

Quintilian

Quintilian and Cicero mutually reflect lights on each other.

Let Cicero, therefore, be your master, in *style*; and Quintilian, in the *rules of rhetoric*. Aristotle may remain on your shelves, till your own inclination shall prompt you to take him down.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIV.

MY LORD,

IN the study of rhetoric, unlike a professor of anatomy, who presents to you a skeleton, rather than a beautiful living body, I advise you to contemplate the finished masterpieces of eloquence produced by genius, polished by art, and brought, as far as human nature will allow, to consummate perfection. The dry books of rhetoric which starve the genius by their meagre diet, I leave to students who talk of eloquence in the schools; but who will have no opportunity, as you will, of displaying

ing it in the senate or at the bar. You, my Lord, will spend your valuable time of preparation better than in talking *about it and about it*. You will imbibe as much of theory as is necessary, and no more; and then plunge into the practice. I have courage; and I venture to predict, that you will swim without corks, while the rhetoricians from the schools shall scarcely be able to keep their heads above water.

But if there is any author on the art of rhetoric less dreary than the *scholastic rhetoricians*, and you chuse to read him, by all means pursue your inclination. If there is any rhetorician with the genius of an orator, I exhort you to study him; and what think you
of

of Longinus? Panegyric has been lavish in his praise. But to speak the truth, I think you will learn more from his example than his precepts. He teaches little by rule; but his style is fine, his sentiments noble. Plotinus calls Longinus a *philologer*; not a philosopher. Longinus certainly bears no resemblance to Aristotle, and indeed very little to Quintilian. Read Longinus, as I have advised you to read Demosthenes; ALoud; for he is in truth an *orator*, in the shape of a *critic*. Catch his spirit; and it will *ennoble* your eloquence; it will *ennoble* your heart, more than the blood of the Tudors. His Treatise on the Sublime, or rather on *pre-eminent excellence*, for so I might entitle it, is but short; and

and if you have a good appetite, you may devour and digest the whole in a fortnight.

Mr. Toup's edition of Longinus, so far as concerns the state of the text, is far superior to that of Bishop Pearce. It was subsequent to it; and Mr. Toup, I believe, was a far better Greek scholar than the good bishop, whose merit, however, ought not to be lightly esteemed. The bishop's notes are well worth your attention; but read the text in Toup's edition. Remember my old and repeated advice. Let the text of your authors occupy the first and greatest share of your attention. Many scholars actually take more delight in the notes than the text; and seem to have forgotten their
author,

author, while they are immerfed in the commentary. Pray beware of thefe Lethæan waters. The notes in *Tollius's* edition are too numerous, and frequently little to the purpofe. *Toup's* and *Rbunkenius's* notes chiefly concern the correctness of the text, and the collation of manufcripts; and therefore, though very valuable, are not adapted to the nature of your Lordship's liberal ftudies, which are to terminate in life and action, and not to be confined to the fhade of a cloifter. You will be thankful to the *verbal critics* for giving you a corrected text; but you will not trouble yourfelf about the means by which they were enabled to correct it. That was their affair, and they have difcharged the duty faithfully. They

have fully evinced their learning, ingenuity, and industry. The world knows their excellence; and you, my Lord, will, for the present, give them credit for it, without troubling yourself to examine the testimonies. Your business is with the master, and not with his fervile retinue.

The English translation of Longinus by Dean *Smith*, has been in great repute. It is certainly the best translation of him in English; but I do not think your Lordship will be able to form from it a just idea of the animated style of Longinus. Besides, as the Dean was under the necessity of following Pearce's text, which is not very correct, he has in some places misrepresented Longinus, which he
would

would not have done, had Mr. Toup's edition been published when he wrote.

I mention the imperfections of translations, chiefly to induce your Lordship to have recourse to the originals; and not to acquiesce, through mere indolence, in a faint copy. And I do it the more solicitously, because many sensible men, who have forgotten their school attainments, contend, that to read the original languages is now an unnecessary trouble, and mere pedantry; since all that is valuable in them may be read more compendiously in excellent translations in our own language. I must not close my letter without desiring you to read, as a preparation for Longinus, the learned
disserta-

dissertation of Schardam prefixed by Toup to his edition. I regret that an edition from so accurate a critic, and from an university press, should not be free from gross typographical *errata*. You will be aware of them, and correct as you read.

I am, &c.

LETTER XV.

MY LORD,

UNWILLING as I am to require more of you than your time will admit, I do not mention *Demetrius Phalereus*, and *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, two other justly celebrated rhetoricians, as absolutely necessary to be read by you: but I recommend them as a very desirable part of your rhetorical studies, when opportunity shall enable you, and your inclination lead you, to study them with the attention they deserve.

The book of Dionysius the Halicarnassian, on *the structure of words*,

is a most curious, ingenious, and instructive performance. Well understood and digested, it will enable your Lordship to judge of style on solid principles, not merely by instinctive or improved *taste*, but with a *critical knowledge* of the cause of that excellence which you feel and admire. But as such treatises are rather apt to disgust *young* students, I willingly consent to your postponing them, till your own curiosity shall prompt you to examine their recondite doctrines. When you shall have read them, you will be a *master*, and no longer a scholar.

I am still of opinion, and I will repeat, that you will improve more by familiarizing your ear and understanding to the pure and finished orations of Cicero and Demosthenes,

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than by the best didactic teachers, ancient and modern. I have already recommended these authors with earnestness, and they may continue to be the study of your life, as well as of your earlier age.

But I should be guilty of a great omission, if I did not also recommend the study of those speeches, which the *ancient historians* have abundantly inserted in the course of their fine recitals.

There is an old collection of speeches, in folio, both from the Greek and Roman historians, which I wish you to procure. Read the most celebrated of them; never omitting the argument prefixed, without which you will often be involved in darkness, and lay aside the book in that
disgust

disgust which arises from obscurity. The *Latin* part of this useful publication has been printed for the use of schools, in a small pocket volume, and, as a student of oratory, you cannot do better than make it a companion. If you were to learn a few of the short speeches by memory, and repeat them with emphasis as an exercise, you would inevitably catch a portion of the Athenian and the Roman fire. You will observe in them a wonderful variety of style, corresponding with the characters of the various speakers and writers; and you will discover beauties not at all inferior to those of Cicero and Demosthenes.

You will immediately see that most of the speeches are the compositions

positions of the *historians*, and not of the personages to whom they are attributed. You will therefore justly expect to find in them all the excellencies of the finest writers, of Livy, of Sallust, of Tacitus. In the speeches you will see their general excellencies in singular perfection; for the historians certainly exerted the whole force of their genius in exhibiting the *eloquence* of their principal characters. The speeches are, in fact, in the best style of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus.

I think this exercise will be entertaining, and that you will pursue it from choice, after you have once begun it. Let me add, that if you were first to commit the *Latin* or *Greek*
to

to memory, and then recite, in your study, the *subject-matter* in *English*, in the very best words which you can command, you would derive a great degree of improvement from the habitual practice.

I am, &c.

LETTER XVI.

MY LORD,

As happiness is the ultimate scope of our studies, as well as of all our other activity, if there is any mode of prosecuting them likely to disturb happiness, it ought to be relinquished, though in itself it may be a right mode, and highly conducive to the particular end proposed. But you are sensible, that no happiness can be enjoyed without *health*; and it will avail you little, to become a scholar, a philosopher, and an orator, to the essential detriment of your constitution.

Therefore,

Therefore, my Lord, as your sincere friend, who wishes your happiness above every thing, and recommends study only so far as it is productive of it, I think it my duty to advise a great attention to the preservation of your health in the conduct of your studies.

Have regard to the attitude in which you read or write. Vary it as much as you can: sit, stand, and walk, alternately. Continue not the same studies ~~after a~~ languor seizes you. Make use of weights, such as were used in the *Skiamachia*. Use a swing for your hands, suspended from the ceiling of your book-room. Adopt every contrivance which the ingenious mechanic has devised to counteract the effects of a sedentary life.

Let

Let your diet be simple; but at the same time plentiful. Abstemiousness has been carried to a pernicious extreme by the present age. Dr. Cheyne's books contributed to introduce it, and Dr. Cadogan's pamphlet on the gout rendered it universal among valetudinarians. Asthenic or nervous diseases have in course multiplied.

But the diseases of inanition are less easily cured than those of repletion. You will, in this, as in every thing else, observe the golden mean; following, in great measure, the dictates of nature, the suggestions of unprovoked appetite, your own feelings, and your own constitution. As a student, in some degree sedentary, you require a generous,
though

though a frugal diet. Be not afraid of growing too corpulent. Many young men and women have ruined their health by endeavours to emaciate their persons, for the sake of a genteel figure. It is vain to contend against nature; we may destroy her strength, but we cannot alter her course, without doing ourselves an irreparable injury.

Beware of tampering with medicine. There are books which pretend to render every man his own physician; and they have done great mischief to the weak and valetudinary. Seek the best advice under disease, and follow it. Assist it by a careful attention to diet, fresh air, and moderate exercise. The *non-naturals* are the best physic.

Read

Read little or nothing very late in the evening : spend the hours before you retire to rest in cheerful conversation, and take care to retire early. You will thus be inclined to rise early, and the morning air will brace and invigorate you for the business of the day. In the management of your body, approach as much as possible to nature and simplicity. Never fail, in fine weather, to use two hours exercise before dinner. Let not your exercise be very violent, or long protracted. The present age seems to have run into an extreme with respect to exercise, as well as abstemiousness. Exercise has been rendered hard labour, and abstemiousness downright starving. No wonder, that the poor frail machine is soon worn out with constant friction,

tion, and with scarcely any oil to supply its waste, and facilitate its motion.

These few hints on the subject of your health, I thought it right to submit to you, before we proceed any farther in our correspondence; but I must add caution upon caution. In taking care of your health, be upon your guard lest you become fanciful; and suspect yourself to be ill when you are in perfect health. Fanciful maladies have the ill effect of real ones, and frequently produce them. Remember the famous inscription on the tomb of an imaginary valetudinarian, "I was well, I would be better, and here I am."

You have youth and a good constitution. You may therefore confide

side in it, so long as you do not abuse it by excess either of indulgence or of self-denial. It has been said, that it is better *to wear out, than to rust out*. And indeed indolence, an uncomfortable and dishonourable state in itself, is also the fruitful parent of diseases, both ~~real~~ and fanciful.

Be gentle and moderate in every thing which concerns your regimen; and thus will your health and your diligence last the longer.

I am, &c.

LETTER XVII.

MY LORD,

I Might now lay aside my pen ; for I am clearly of opinion, that when you shall have done what I have already advised, you will be well able to direct your own studies without assistance. But you desire me to proceed, and give you my thoughts on the remainder of the plan which you proposed ; and in general, on subjects allied to literature and the conduct of life. I comply with pleasure ; but remember, my Lord, I do not pretend to prescribe with the authority of a tutor.

I do

I do no more than communicate my thoughts for our mutual amusement, and you are perfectly at liberty to reject or adopt whatever I may recommend.

If I do not forget, your plan comprehended the *Belles Lettres*, Logic, Ethics, Metaphysics, Physics, Mathematics, History, General Philosophy, and General Literature.

In forming your Lordship as a speaker, almost every part of the *Belles Lettres* will be of use. There is scarcely any beauty of style or sentiment, that may not add to the embellishment, as well as to the substance, of a fine piece of oratory. But in pursuit of the *Belles Lettres*, after the first great authors are recommended,

commended, you must be allowed to chuse your books agreeably to your own taste. Much control or limitation is, I believe, detrimental to genius. I will, however, as you desire it, write to you on the subject; but not in the form of a preceptor. I dictate not to you as a master, but communicate, as a friend and companion.

I have some cursory thoughts to suggest, on *polite learning*, every part of which is highly necessary for your study; but I shall intersperse them occasionally, or reserve them, till I have written to you a few hints on Logic, Ethics, and the rest of the course which I have just now described. If I shall be found to

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make

make frequent excursions, you will remember, that I never affected, in the course of a familiar correspondence, the precise formality of a didactic system.

I am, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

MY LORD,

WE can neither write, speak, nor think justly, however *plausibly*, without reasoning conclusively. If there is an art then, which undertakes to improve us in the power of using our reason, let us earnestly seek its assistance. Such is the art of Logic.

You may speak fluently, rhetorically, and perhaps agreeably, without it; but not solidly. A plain-speaking and clear-headed man, may rise and refute the whole of your harangue, if it is illogical, by two or

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three

three well-argued sentences, without a single trope.

Let us then, my Lord, lay in a store of Logic, as a *foundation* for our rhetoric. When we shall have fixed a firm foundation, we may adorn our front, as much as we please, with festoons, Corinthian pillars, friezes, and cornices.

But is Logic able to effect what it pretends? Perhaps not quite so much; but judiciously cultivated, it can do a great deal, and it is well worth some share of your attention. Besides, you cannot be a general scholar, which I wish you to be, without some acquaintance with this celebrated art, merely as a branch of literature.

The

The Logic books which I advise you to procure are ; those of Wallis, Sanderfon, Aldrich, Watts, and Duncan. Watts's Logic, read in select parts, will perhaps answer your purpose ; but I advise you to inspect the others, that you may form a just idea of the scholastic terms, and the language of logicians.

That part of the Logic books which treats of *sophisms*, is particularly worthy of your study. It may enable you to detect fallacies in the speeches of your opponents, and to avoid them in your own. It may teach you to confute a long harangue with a single observation.

You will in course perfect yourself in the art of making syllogisms ; and

I am under no apprehension of your dwelling on logical subtilties, so as to lose much time, or cool the ardour of your genius, formed, as it is, for livelier and more active pursuits.

But, my Lord, give me leave to advise you to apply the art of Logic, where it is much wanted, and has seldom been closely followed, to *common life*. You will there find it of great advantage. People are forever reasoning wrong in common conversation, and on the motives and consequences of their daily conduct. From the want of just thought and accurate reasoning on common emergencies, they hastily form wrong conclusions, and fall into foolish actions; the slaves of prejudice,

dice, ignorance, passion, and absurdity. All this might easily be avoided, by exercising *plain common sense*, sufficiently *informed*; or, in other words, by *sound logic*.

You will derive much happiness and dignity from accustoming yourself to submit your fancies, humours, caprices, and all your eager desires, to the touchstone of a syllogism. When any new question arises in common life, no less than books, which requires a sound judgment, form the matter into a *syllogism*, and abide by the conclusion, whatever it may be, faithfully and resolutely. By using yourself to this method in little things, you will naturally adopt it in great ones; and the result will be, sound judgment in writing, speaking,

and acting; decision in thought, and firmness in conduct.

A most valuable effect this, of studying in the school of Aristotle. It will give you a superiority over more than half mankind, who seldom allow themselves time to reason closely and justly, if they reason at all.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIX.

MY LORD,

I N the plan of academical education established in some of the universities, Metaphysics succeed the study of Logic.

But I really cannot recommend them to your particular notice. If your genius leads you to them, you will follow its bias, and probably succeed in the pursuit. But they are, to the generality of men, a dull, if not a useless study. It is difficult to point out their utility to men designed for active life. They are indeed an
innocent

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innocent amusement, and serve to fill up the time of the contemplative.

But as your view is to be a *general* scholar, not merely for the praise of scholarship, or the pleasure of contemplation, but in order to be an *accomplished speaker*, you will make yourself acquainted with some little treatise of Metaphysics, which may give you a general idea of them, and enable you to ascertain their use and value.

I enclose you a little volume, containing a treatise on them by Francis Hutcheson, the Scotch professor: and if you can read it without falling asleep over it, you may acquire from it no inconsiderable share of *elementary* knowledge in the recondite
science

science of Metaphysics : a science no further to be pursued by you, than as it is a branch of general erudition.

Read also Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, and you will perhaps have proceeded as far in these abstruse researches as your time will allow, and indeed as far as your present occasions will require. Should you hereafter become a professed philosopher, you will penetrate more deeply, and extend your views more widely, in the dreary region of Metaphysics, where, to the eye of genius and imagination, no blossom blows, no verdure softens the horror of the scene.

I am, &c.

LETTER XX.

MY LORD,

THE time you save by shortening the period of your application to Metaphysics, may be usefully devoted to the more valuable parts of Logic. Mistake me not so much as to suppose that I despise Logic in general. It is only the *scholastic* part which I wish you to neglect. Rational Logic, or common sense improved by rules, is a most valuable art; and I should be glad to observe in you a taste for it's cultivation.

Logic, you know, is divided into four parts. The first teaches to conceive

ceive clear ideas of single objects: the second, to form a judgment on them: the third, to argue from them conclusively: and the fourth, to arrange them in the best and most lucid order.

Nothing can contribute more than this, to accomplish the orator and the man. Logic, divested of its pedantic and unnecessary subtilties, is very justly termed *an instrument*; or as Aristotle termed it, an *organon*, to facilitate the attainment of all other sciences.

After reading Sanderson or Watts, form in your own mind a little logical system for daily use. Accustom yourself to conceive clearly, to judge or affirm on solid grounds, to reason
irrefra-

irrefragably, and to methodize in the most convenient and luminous arrangement.

Carrying this *organon*, as philosophers call it, or instrument, about you, like your watch, or your opera-glass, you will find it of perpetual service. It will give you an advantage in the transaction of all business, whether public or private. Few men possess it. Many have indeed read the common treatises on Logic; but they were either puzzled or disgusted, or both, with the dull subtilties of the schools, and never disentangled the good from the bad, so as to be able to avail themselves of it after leaving the university. You will extract the kernel, and throw away the shell.

A clear

A clear head is certainly one of the most valuable blessings which a man, and especially a man of business, such as you intend to be, can possess. Nature must have done a great deal towards producing it; but the *Manual of Logic* which I recommend, that is, a little system compiled by yourself, and divested of every thing superfluous, will improve and assist nature wonderfully.

It is impossible but that he who has long exercised his mind in defining, dividing, distinguishing, arguing, and methodizing, should excel the majority of men with whom he converses. And there is a pleasure in these operations, which will lead him who has once tasted it, to pursue them on all occasions which require deliberation.

Indif-

Indistinctness of ideas, falsehood, blunders, inconclusive argumentation and confusion, are painful; and yet, to the misfortune of human nature, they are common. Error, guilt, sorrow, and every species of folly and misery, are the consequences; and therefore your Lordship, on a due consideration of the matter, can want no exhortation to study an art, which tends to improve man in that very faculty in which he excels all the animal creation.

But, my Lord, cautions are necessary to be added to almost every piece of advice. While I urge you to reason on every thing, you must remember that I mean that you should reason in *silent* thought,

and not obtrude your arguments on every occasion, and in all company. A cavilling, wrangling, disputatious habit will not be borne. You must think with the wise, and, on many occasions, condescend to talk with the vulgar. You will go into few companies, and be present in little business, where some parties do not err against every rule of logic; in perceiving indistinctly, judging falsely, arguing absurdly, and in placing things in a preposterous order. You must hear, and bear with patience; taking care to let your own mind be regulated by your invaluable *organon*, or *portable Rule of Reason*.

As Logic is but little attended to
in the course of what is called a
I polite

polite education, you will have the advantage, on most occasions, of a singular solidity in your eloquence. You will often gain your point, and be admired and esteemed for great abilities in the conduct of business, when you have done no more than exercise your common sense, unwarped by fancy, prejudice, and passion.

You very justly observe, that I have often, in your hearing, expressed my contempt of scholastic Logic. I still avow it. But lest you should suppose that I condemned rational Logic with it, I have been here more diffuse in endeavouring to convince you that I entertain the highest esteem for it.

Logic, well cultivated, and understood in the sense in which I have recommended, will not fail, with your parts, learning, and other accomplishments, to render you a distinguished and convincing speaker.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.

MY LORD,

A Witling, who intended to throw contempt upon Logic, made an anagram of the word *logica*, and called it *caligo*. As it has been taught for centuries in the scholastic method, to raw boys just entered at the university, it might justly be called, the art of darkening and confusing the mind; but as I have advised you to make use of it, I think it capable of becoming a torch to illuminate your whole progress throughout the land of learning: but you must not dwell on it as an *end*. Use it, as, what
it

it is, merely an instrument. Use it as you would a pair of spectacles, or a spying-glass, when you cannot see so clearly without it as with it. You have good eyes, and perhaps may not often want a magnifying-glass; but it is good to keep one in your pocket.

There is little danger of too great an attention being paid to this study in the present age. The tide of fashion and prejudice runs strongly against it; and it is for this reason I have thought it necessary to urge your attention to it.

It is very true, that God has not made men merely animals, and left it to Aristotle to make them rational. Boys reason, illiterate men and wo-

men reason; and though they often reason wrong, yet, for the most part, they are capable of reasoning rightly, if they will but exert their natural abilities, unassisted by art and rule.

It has been said, that a man might as well learn the art of eating, drinking, walking, seeing, smelling, tasting, and the rest, as the art of reasoning; that the power of reasoning comes to a rational creature as naturally, as the power of muscular motion: and in exerting muscular motion, who gives himself the trouble to learn the names of the muscles to be moved, and the sinews to be strained? There is great plausibility, and some truth, in all these objections to Logic. They are indeed sound objections, whenever
Logic

Logic is taught as a *principal* object; not as a means, but as an end, or as absolutely necessary to the use of natural reason.

I recommend it only as an auxiliary, which, under proper management, may be highly useful. And though I have a sovereign contempt for the Logic of the schools, and the poor pedantry, which made a merely instrumental art the ultimate scope of study, and the business of life, yet I most confidently advise you to comprise it among your preparatory studies. You will not spend that time upon the *tools*, which is necessary to finish the *work*.

Of the five books which I mentioned, Wallis, Sanderfon, Aldrich,

Watts, and Duncan, you ask me the several characters. Wallis is clear, but diffuse and tedious. Sanderson is masterly in definition; and I wish you to read him with great attention. Aldrich's book is a little compendium, which may serve occasionally to refresh your memory, whenever you are desirous of reviving your logical knowledge. Watts's, being in English, and rendered easy and popular, you may probably be induced to give it the most attentive perusal. Duncan's was used in some colleges in Oxford; but I know not why it should be preferred to the others.

Dr. Watts was of a most devout and religious disposition, and gave every thing he touched a religious tinge.

tinge. This, I hope, will be no objection, in your mind, to his very ingenious book. It ought to be a recommendation of it to every good and pious man; though it must, at the same time, be allowed, that the zealous divine has sometimes obtruded divinity, where it could not be introduced without some degree of violence. Like the zealous fanatic, he has often erected a pulpit upon unconsecrated ground.

There are many other treatises on Logic, beside those which I have mentioned; but they are scarcely worth your attention. They attempt to diversify, where diversification is not wanted, and to facilitate, where the difficulty is easily surmountable by common sagacity.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXII.

MY LORD,

I Am glad you treated with silent contempt the farcaſtical hints which were thrown out againſt your pedantry, by the merry Noblemen whom you deſcribe. To argue with them, would have been fruitleſs, and not worth your while. They would have overpowered you with noiſe, nonſenſe, oaths, and laughter. They may be jolly, good-natured companions; but they will never become *great* men. They muſt lean on the merit of their anceſtors.

It

It is a common artifice among the ignorant and profligate, to endeavour to explode all appearances of learning, under the name of pedantry; and all professions of virtue and religion, under that of *methodism*, or hypocrisy. I am glad you have sense enough to see their artifice; and spirit enough not to be intimidated by their clamour. Their triumph will be but short. Indeed, it is no triumph, but in the company of silly young men like themselves, who naturally associate together from similarity of taste, for mutual defence, and to keep each other in countenance.

It must be often your lot to fall into such company. Whenever it happens,

happens, the best way is to treat them with real good-nature, yet with a civility rather distant; never attempting, at your age, to *preach*, as they call it, nor to obtrude your knowledge on their unwilling attention. Yet always remember to act and speak with spirit, blended with your good-nature, or else they will overbear you.

Persevere, with unshaken steadfastness, in the laudable pursuits which you have chosen; and you will soon be looked up to by those who now wish to reduce you to their own level. They are unfortunately ignorant, and have nothing but false fire and audacity to support a figure in society.

Avoid all unnecessary singularity; but be manly enough to dare, in spite of all the imputations of pendency, to persist in endeavouring to render yourself singular in moral and intellectual excellence, though never so in matters of indifference.

The persons who wished to render you ridiculous, by calling you pendent, have indeed, through the corruption of the state, some political consequence; though they have no other personal authority than their fortunes purchase, and their presumption arrogates. Take care not to make them enemies, for they are revengeful and mischievous. They will soon enough be inclined to court your acquaintance, and to seek your advice. You will be of
real

real consequence to them; for you will have weight of character and weight of abilities, together with rank and fortune. Make them friends by honourable means. They may become, under your guidance, (for, depend upon it, they are too insignificant to become leaders themselves,) useful auxiliaries in accomplishing the purposes of your patriotism, and of your virtuous and benevolent ambition.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

MY LORD,

IF I do not forget, your course of studies at the university was disposed in the following order: Logic, Metaphysics, Physics. I do not indeed think it the properest order; for Mathematics should precede Physics, as a proper preparation for them; and Metaphysics might be postponed to the last, if not entirely omitted.

But as the order may be changed according to your own discretion, let us proceed to the consideration of Physics, or Natural Philosophy.

My

My Lord, I am clearly of opinion, that the best introduction to the science, after Arithmetic and Geometry, is a course of lectures on it, illustrated by experiments. Opportunities of attending such lectures abound; for, so pleasing and popular are the performances of the experimentalist, that ingenious men, under the self-assumed title of philosophers, travel the country, as Thespis did of old, with his cart, and bring science to our doors, soliciting admission and reward.

Science, or Philosophy, approaching in this humiliated form, loses something of her apparent dignity, but nothing of her real value. The itinerant experimentalists are worthy
your

your attention. They are in possession of an expensive and troublesome apparatus, which it is their interest to preserve constantly in order. They are used to the management of it; and from habit, acquire a facility in performing their operations, which more able theorists may not possess, through defect of a dexterity merely mechanical.

On entering on the study of Natural Philosophy, do not involve yourself in long and dull treatises, which may disgust by their difficulty: but attend experimental lectures repeatedly, till you have a clear and perfect knowledge of all that a comprehensive course usually explains in the most familiar manner. If any subject strikes you with particu-

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lar force, and seems remarkably congenial to your own turn of mind, pursue it farther in books. They abound; and are well known to common fame.

Should your genius be peculiarly inclined to Natural Philosophy, go to the fountain-head, after a due preparation of mathematical learning, and experimental lectures. Dare to enter upon the sublime discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton. *Pemberton's View* of them may be a proper introduction. I could easily give you a long catalogue of introductory and explanatory books; but it is unnecessary; they stand foremost in every shop, and you will select them for yourself, or follow the direction of your experimental lecturer.

Natural

Natural History, Botany, Chemistry, will probably excite, as they will richly gratify, your liberal curiosity. Why need I mention Buffon, Linné, Bergman, and the other celebrated authors in these departments? Every professor or lecturer can tell you, if you should wish to know, the most popular and esteemed books in these sciences, which are now very generally cultivated as fashionable pursuits.

As your fortune will enable you to purchase the large, expensive books in Natural Philosophy, which are illustrated with coloured prints, I advise you to adorn your library with them sumptuously. Persons of your rank and fortune are they who

K 2

should

should encourage such works; and they will always afford you an elegant amusement, with little other labour than that of inspection.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

MY LORD,

You seem to have a taste for *Vertù*. I scarcely know whether I may desire you to encourage it. I think you should not make it a prime object. There is something in it of a trifling nature, inconsistent with the character of a man of business; of business so important as yours, *government and legislation*. At the same time, I think you should indulge your inclination within moderate bounds; both because a virtuous taste will afford you entertainment as a favourite study, and

information on many useful subjects connected with general knowledge.

Coins, medals, shells, and all the articles which furnish the cabinets of the curious, supply a philosophical mind with many hints for useful reflection. To the trifling mind which dotes on them, as an infant on its toys, their utility is circumscribed to their power of affording an inoffensive amusement. But let me add, that inoffensive amusements are of too much value, among the opulent whose time is their own, to be entirely despised.

You ask me, whether I advise you to indulge an *antiquarian taste*. By all means; if you feel a strong propensity to it. It will furnish you with

with much delight, and much matter for entertaining reflection. The mind must have a hobby-horse to ride for recreation.

But though I do not dissuade you from being a virtuoso and an antiquarian, yet I most earnestly recommend it to you, to confine your taste for virtù and antiquities within such bounds, as may prevent it from absorbing your attention to studies, which, whether your own honour or the advantage of others is concerned, I must consider as infinitely more important. Let others trifle. A Nobleman is *born* for momentous affairs.

This restraint is, I know, attended with some difficulty. For if we love

trifles at all, we commonly love them immoderately. Our whimsical studies, being objects of our own choice, are apt to engross our affections like darlings. I should be sorry to see you, in the midst of your coins and antiquities, forgetting your eloquence, your style, your polite learning, and your enlarged philosophy. I wish you to emulate a Clarendon and a Chatham, rather than a Leland and a Hearne. Perhaps there is little danger of excess of application to any studies of this kind, in an age when horses, hounds, the bottle, and the dice, often engross the most precious hours of the most improvable age.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXV.

MY LORD,

I Have no great opinion of *Ethics*, treated as a *science*, according to the forms of the old schoolmen. Great ingenuity is indeed shewn in them; but it is an ingenuity which tends to confound the plain and natural distinction of good and evil, written on the heart of man in the luminous characters of a sunbeam. In the hands of the casuists, *Ethics* become a science, not very favourable to that simplicity of mind which contributes more to honesty and to true enjoyment, than all the precepts
of

of the most celebrated moralists. Feel as you ought to feel, and, with the direction of common sense, you will, for the most part, act as you ought to act.

Since, however, the art of man has reduced *Ethics* to the form of a system and a science, it will be proper for you to give it some of your attention. To know something of them *systematically*, is a necessary part of a comprehensive education. I must mention by the way, that the glorious gospel rule, of *doing to others as we wish they should do unto us*, constitutes an epitome of many folios, in casuistical and systematical morality.

There is a pretty compendium of moral philosophy, by Francis Hutcheson,

Hutcheson, whose little book on Metaphysics I have already mentioned to you. You will find in it the *Elements of Ethics*, Natural Jurisprudence, Œconomics, and Politics, clearly and succinctly displayed. This will be a very useful *introduction*, as the author justly professes it to be, to the ancient moralists, to Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, and Cicero; and to the moderns, Grotius, Cumberland, Puffendorf, and Harrington.

These great authors you will read as your leisure and inclination may lead you. The celebrity of Puffendorf's book *de Officio Hominis & Civis* is such, that I think you will not rest satisfied, without giving it a very attentive perusal, after reading

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Hutcheson. If you should make yourself a perfect master of Hutcheson's Compendious Institution, and of Puffendorf, you will not be at a loss on the subject of systematic or scientific Ethics, and your understanding will be much enlightened by the study.

Archdeacon Paley's Book on Moral and Political Philosophy has singular merit; for it is entertaining as well as highly instructive; a circumstance rather uncommon in scientific treatises on morals. Remember, however, that I do not entirely subscribe to all his doctrines, several of which appear to be a little too casuistical; I will not say, jesuitical, for I greatly respect the author. Read it with attention; and make your own reflections

fections on some parts, which appear to be *accommodated* to things *as they are*, rather than *as they should be*. The Archdeacon acknowledges himself greatly indebted to *Search's Light of Nature*; the three or four last volumes of which, certainly abound in excellent thoughts, and original illustrations; I mean those volumes, which have in the title-page, "*The Light of Nature and the Gospel blended.*" This work is voluminous, verbose, and heavy; and, notwithstanding its great merit, difficult to be read without weariness and occasional disgust, arising from prolixity. Yet it abounds with new ideas and valuable doctrine.

If you can find time, and feel an inclination for these studies, I must
not

not omit to urge your reading *Grotius on the Rights of War and Peace*. It is certainly a master-piece of its kind; and therefore should be known by every general scholar. At the same time, I cannot but be a little apprehensive lest your style as an orator should suffer by a long study of compositions, rather jejune and destitute of grace. They are merely *skeletons*; whereas I wish you to study complete models, where the features glow with life, and the limbs are nerved with vigour. I do not introduce you to the *hortus siccus*, when you can see the lily and rose blooming and flourishing with life and beauty, in *your garden*.

To learn *Ethics*, I should therefore rather chuse to refer you to such

writers as Plato, Cicero, and Addison. There you will behold the body of Truth, adorned with beauty and the complexion of health. In Puffendorf, Grotius, and other systematic writers, you see truth indeed, but you see her lovely form disfigured by the knife of the anatomist.

After having read a volume or two of the best writers in the systematic way, in order to obtain an idea of Ethics, thus treated as a science, you will proceed to imbibe morality, as the bee sucks honey, from every book of History, Poetry, Oratory, and Divinity, which falls under your notice. You will roam from flower to flower, and return loaded to your hive.

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The book of Nature, and the book of the World, lie open to you; books little read by the Grotius's and the Barbeyracs. There, with the assistance of the knowledge you have already acquired, and will hereafter increase, in your study, you will comment on men and manners; always measuring the morality of actions by the Golden Canon already repeated, of *doing to others as you wish they should do unto you.*

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

MY LORD,

I Must repeat my caution against the *casuistry* which the great writers on *Ethics* have involuntarily introduced. A good heart and a good understanding, assisted by a virtuous and liberal education, will seldom err in deciding on the rectitude or obliquity of actions. But he who is accustomed to suppose *nice* cases of conscience, and to make curious exceptions and distinctions in morality, will, whenever he is inclined, find it no difficult task to vindicate, by ingenious sophisms, any

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villany. Hence the sophistry and false philosophy which disgrace the age. *Systematic Ethics* and *Casuiſtry*, however ingenious, are, for the moſt part, to be conſidered as curious ſubjects for ſpeculation, as fine exerciſes for the reaſoning powers, and as pleaſing amuſements for the contemplative. When you *act*, conſult your conſcience; conſult experience, conſult prudence, conſult real life; and diſcard chimæras of perfection.

My Lord, I have hitherto ſaid little upon *Religion*. I reſerve that ſubject for our future correſpondence. But I cannot leave the ſubject of *Ethics*, without giving you my idea, that in the Gospels, and the excellent ſermons to which they have given riſe in the Engliſh language,
you

you will find, as might be expected, the best code of Moral Law which the world ever knew. Philosophy, sublimed by religion, comes out, like metals refined by the fire.

And let me intreat you, not to be deterred either from hearing or reading good sermons, by the prejudices of the profligate and the infidel. In these you will find morality taught and enforced with the powers of human eloquence, and under the sanction of divine authority. Some of our divines were fine classical scholars, and most profound philosophers; so that in them you will discover the beauties of style, the finest Ethics, derived indeed, in some measure, from heathen philosophy,

losophy, but improved and enforced by religion.

Before I leave the subject of *Ethics*, which is indeed a very copious one, but which I abridge, for the sake of avoiding unnecessary details, let me recommend to your reading, *Wollaston's Religion of Nature*. It will agreeably exercise your understanding, though you should disapprove the systematical form. You may detect some mistakes in it; you may think it too mathematical in its method and argumentation, but it is full of fine truth; and the marginal notes are pregnant with most valuable instruction, derived from the great masters of antiquity.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

MY LORD,

THOUGH *Oeconomics* are not usually taught in our modern schools, they are worthier of attention, than many things which occupy the time of the student, and inflate him with the self-conceit of profound erudition.

You must have observed how many, both Noblemen and Commoners, with ample inheritances, are reduced to a state of pecuniary distress. Much of it certainly arises from their profusion: but perhaps

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more from their neglect of œconomy. They are unwilling to inspect the state of their finances, from habitual indolence ; and they are also too often unable to adjust their accounts, through ignorance of arithmetic. The more involved their accounts become, the more disagreeable, because the more laborious is the task of examining them. They at last give up the whole in despair, and suffer every thing relating to their finances to be conducted by persons who are indifferent to their employer's interest, and attentive solely to their own.

I recommend, indeed, a personal attention to your estate ; but not a mean parsimony. I recommend it, that you may have it in your power

to be both just and generous; to pay your debts with punctuality, and to give and spend liberally. Independence is one of the daughters of œconomy. Your frugality should be the fountain of your munificence. The reservoir, without this care, however large, will be often exhausted. But I must protest, with peculiar earnestness, against the character of a *miserly Nobleman*. It should be considered as a contradiction in terms.

Œconomics were dignified by the ancients with the appellation of *Praëtical Philosophy*. Xenophon wrote one book upon them, and Aristotle two. But they dwell too much, as might be expected, on general theories; and cannot enter

into such particulars as are really useful in the conduct of common life. I advise you nevertheless to read the work of Xenophon, as it is not long, and is capable of affording you amusement.

Cato, Varro, Columella, and other old authors, have written upon some branches of Œconomics; chiefly the agricultural. As a man of general learning, some knowledge of them may become you; but to gain a skill in Œconomics for real utility, I must refer you to experience, observation, common sense, and common life. I venture to say, that there are more useful ideas on the subject to be collected in the merchant's counting-house, the steward's office, and in the farm,
than

than in all the books of all the philosophers.

But to enable you to make due use of the information you may obtain from any of these quarters, I must recommend it to you to acquire a competent skill in practical arithmetic, and in book-keeping. Despise not the humblest parts of knowledge which can contribute to your comfort and your independence.

Much of your independence, I have already hinted, will be secured by a due attention to your revenue. You will not be obliged to sell your vote and influence; nor to court a Minister for a lucrative employment, so long as you preserve your own finances uninvolved.

Study

Study *Oeconomics*, therefore, with at least as much attention as those sciences which terminate chiefly in speculation. But I must repeat the caution against excessive parsimony. The caution may not appear to be necessary to you at present; for you are conscious, and I am ready to allow with pleasure, that you are as liberal as becomes your birth and property.

But avarice has ever been one of the strongest passions of human nature; and it increases perversely, when there is the least occasion for it, in age and in affluence.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

MY LORD,

I Thank you for the letters which you often send me, containing enquiries suggested by your own reading and reflection. You know I never meant to write a regular system in a familiar correspondence. Your suggestions of occasional topics agreeably breaks the chain of a too formal arrangement.

In studying Ethics, you say you could not be disgusted, as well as perplexed, by the diversity of opinion
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concerning the CHIEF GOOD OF MAN. You ask me my opinion concerning the grand question, In what consists happiness? It is a subject on which I might involve you and myself in a long disquisition: but take the opinions of a modern philosopher, a little dilated.

Mr. Paley enumerates four particulars in which happiness consists:

1st, The exercise of the social affections.

2dly, The exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some *engaging* end; because engagement is the great point to be pursued.

3dly,

3dly, Happiness depends upon the prudent constitution of the HABITS. Set the *habits* in such a manner, that every change may be a change for the better.

4thly, Happiness consists in health. When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel in ourselves a happiness, independent of any outward gratification whatever.

Let us consider these particulars in their order.

In the first place, happiness consists in the exercise of the social affections.

Your Lordship has no doubt experienced the sweet sensations attending the kind affections. There was a
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complacency diffused itself over your bosom, whenever you acted kindly, affectionately, cordially. Cherish such sensations. Sorry am I to say, that this fountain of happiness is often choked and dried up in the circles of gaiety and pleasure to which your rank will introduce you; and the highly-polished man of fashion becomes a selfish animal, seeking only his own gratification: he deceives himself by his greediness: he loses one of the sweetest enjoyments of life: he becomes narrow-minded, morose, imperious, and consequently very unamiable to all around him, even to his dependents and expectants; they secretly despise him, while, for their own interest, they court his favour. As you value your happiness,
never

never lose sight of this first requisite to solid enjoyment, the exercise of the social affections.

The second particular is, the exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some *engaging* end.

But here, my Lord, great caution is necessary. There are ends very engaging, which are finally productive of mischief and misery. I hope you will avoid gaming entirely; it is certainly *engaging*, but its consequences tend to degrade nobility: it introduces to low company; it endangers the estate; it occupies the mind so closely, as to leave little attention for the really *noble* objects which

which ought to *engage* men distinguished in society by titles and by many valuable privileges. Let the charms of science engage you: let the improvement of arts engage you: let the pleasures of conversation or study engage you: let politics engage you; I do not mean the politics of a party, but the enlarged liberal politics of a philanthropist, and a citizen of the world, as well as of a Briton. Be constantly occupied in some laudable, honourable, useful pursuit, and you will feel it your happiness. When the serious business of life is laid aside awhile, be engaged in amusements which do not degrade, while they recreate. I know you disapprove the taste for boxing, and some other fashionable modes of killing time,

time, which, if tolerable in the lowest plebeian, are unbecoming a peer. Surely the grand theatre of the world affords entertaining objects enough for you to contemplate, without reducing you to the necessity of herding with the meanest of the performers on it, in the meanest of their pastimes.

The third requisite to happiness, mentioned by our philosophical divine, is the prudent constitution of the habits. "Set the habits," says he, "in such a manner, that every change may be for the better."

Do not too eagerly anticipate pleasure. Do not *use up*, as he expresses it, the materials of happiness too

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fool: be moderate: glut not the appetite, but keep it in a state susceptible of *obvious* gratification. Accustom not yourself to violent pleasures, which must, from their nature, be difficult to obtain, and short in duration. Form a habit of deriving pleasure from natural circumstances, and such as may occur every day in the common course of human life.

“ In the fourth place, happiness consists in health. When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel a happiness independent of any outward circumstances whatever.”

It has been said, that an attention to health should be a part of our
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religion. Many of our nobility certainly pursue health by exercise ; but remember, my Lord, that temperance and good hours are no less necessary than bodily agitation. Love a life of simplicity ; endeavour not, by false refinement, to render man a different animal from that which God and nature have made him. As an animal, he requires rest and refreshment at seasonable hours ; and when he follows nature, he also, like the animals around him, commonly enjoys health and vigour. But though health is necessary to happiness, yet surely it is degrading to man, especially in his youth, to be satisfied with *health alone* ; this is to live the life of a brute, or even of a vegetable. Use health in profitable and honourable

pursuits; a life so spent would be far more pleasurable and reputable, even if it were shorter, than an inglorious existence dragged out in listless inaction. You were not raised above mankind by your king and country, merely that you might eat, drink, and sleep, without being called to account for your waste of time. To *live merely to take exercise for an appetite*, and to indulge it, when obtained, in luxurious excess, is, for the sake of life, to lose its very best purposes. Yet your Lordship knows some men, who plume themselves on blood, rank, and title, and yet employ *all* their morning in fox-hunting or phaeton-driving, that they may carouse in the evening over dull port, and gorge dainties, rendered poisonous

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ous by the arts of cookery. But as I have heard you express yourself with pity on such men, I need not dissuade you from imitating their example.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

MY LORD,

WHOEVER observes the present times, and compares them with the past, will discover, that one principal feature of them is a neglect of subordination. Rank is not respected as it used to be in the days of our fathers. A nobleman is less regarded at present, than a gentleman of fortune in the reign of the first or second George.

One man is indeed so little superior to another by nature, that the great distinctions that have formerly been

been conferred and preserved, were more supported by opinion than by reality. And how was that opinion raised and maintained? First, let us hope, by intrinsic merit; and secondly, we are sure, by external appearance. The nobility lived in a state of magnificence which awed the vulgar, by whom I mean the worthless of all kinds, and kept them at a due distance. They dressed with a splendour, which the little imitators of gentility could not equal, though they might copy at a distance. They revered themselves and their rank, and consequently avoided company and diversions which lowered them in the minds of the people, over whom they were so pre-eminently exalted. They lived at their noble

mansions hospitably, and travelled to and from them with a princely retinue. They were almost idolized, by fascinating the gaping crowd, as creatures of a superior order.

But now, your Lordship knows, it is the fashion among great men to throw off all personal state. They seek *otium sine dignitate*. It is indeed a pleasant fashion to their inferiors, and perhaps to themselves. But, as a body, do they consult their interest, their honour, or their permanency, by lessening that OPINION, by which chiefly they were raised to their superiority? Let events determine. We see what has happened in France; FACILIS DESCENSUS. If nobility is a valuable privilege; if it conduces to
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the happiness of society, by exciting virtue, and protecting it; then any mode which can secure its dignity inviolate and undiminished, is worth attention. And be assured, that external pomp is necessary in a community where men are not universally philosophers. All states have invested magistrates and nobles with official garments, splendid coronets, maces, fasces, or something to strike the eyes and imagination of the mere *Fæx Romuli*, the lower orders of the people, who must in all states be the majority.

You observe that the bishops, judges, counsellors, clergy, military officers, are all decorated by the wisdom of our ancestors with certain robes or dresses, distinctive, solemn, or
splen-

splendid. "All the world's a stage," says the poet, and if so, all the performers must appear in characters, dressed according to the *το πρεπον*, the real decorum of their characters, or they will be mutually disgusted.

Now, my Lord, no man dislikes formality without substance more than myself. Ease, and some degree of carelessness, add a charm to private and humble life: but to those who are exalted by opinion at first, and afterwards by the laws and constitution of their country, an appearance corresponding with their rank and their titles is requisite. The same love of ease and equality in appearances, which annihilate all the insignia of superiority, or civil distinction.

distinction, will proceed in time to destroy the superiority itself, in a natural and unavoidable progression.

So that, my Lord, though I do not recommend *empty pride*, yet I must advise, after having adorned your hereditary rank by personal and acquired merit, to assume all the external dignity, which your ancestors wisely deemed necessary to support the honour of nobility. Be nobly distinguished in every part of your establishment and your mansions. Mankind are so made, as to expect externals to correspond with internals. You have sense enough not to value yourself the more for a fine house, a fine equipage, or a fine dress; but the artisan, the servant,
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the tenant, the vulgar in general, will pay a deference to you proportioned to your appearance. If you do not comply with their prejudices in this respect, they will soon consider all the honour they pay to your birth and titles as prejudice, which they ought not to indulge. Many among the nobility of this age have demolished the outworks; let them not be surprised if the mob rush in and raze the citadel.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXX.

MY LORD,

YOU took my advice, I find, and have been reading the eighth satire of Juvenal. I should be much pleased to hear your comments; but you desire my thoughts upon it. You know I am always ready to employ my literary leisure in complying with such requests as proceed from an ingenuous desire of information. Such a desire is itself a mark of a noble nature.

Juvenal's eighth satire contains sentiments which cannot be perfectly agreeable

agreeable to the feelings of a corrupt and depraved nobility. But are they founded in truth? Then adopt them, my Lord; and relinquishing in your own mind all hereditary claims to distinction, found them on your own personal merit. Emulate the first founder of your family, if he was raised by virtue. Be RE-ENNOBLED by your own efforts. scorn to shine faintly, like the moon, with reflected light. Be a sun; not a planet, nor a satellite.

You have read this fine remain of antiquity in the original. It abounds in spirit and fire, as well as solid sense. I shall not recapitulate the sentiments, as they must lose much of their force in any expressions but those

those of their animated author. But let me prevail with you to learn the whole satire *memoriter*. You have been used to commit passages from the Latin classics to your memory; and you can remember nothing in any of them more conducive to your real honour, than the eighth satire of Juvenal. It is to be wished that it may be well translated, for the benefit of those of the young nobility who are not so well able to read it in the original as your lordship. Even *they may make out the meaning*, with benefit to themselves, by the assistance of *Madan's literal translation*, and notes. Dryden or Johnson should have exerted all the vigour of their genius, in naturalising in our country, a poem so full of instruction to those whose conduct
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and example is of the first consequence to society.

Do you think that my Lord
*****, or ***, or *****, would
have disgraced their ancestors and the
peerage, by their gross ignorance,
their brutal behaviour, their low
pursuits, their vulgar associates, if
they had been impressed early in
life with the ideas of the manly
Juvenal on true nobility. But they
were wretchedly educated, servilely
flattered, surrounded by mean hire-
lings, ready, for their own interest,
to gratify them in every folly, and
to anticipate their whimsical wants.

A classical education contributes more than any thing I know to ennoble the mind. A boy conversant with

with the ancient Greeks and Romans, imbibes the most generous ideas, the tincture will not easily be lost. But you will say that Lord ***, and ***, and **, and ****, had a classical education. Pardon me, my Lord, they were sent to schools where they might have had it, but they had it not. They relied on private tutors and plebeian school-fellows for all their exercises. They employed their time and thoughts in frolics, in spending money, and acquiring the reputation of *fine fellows*, who were above the plodding toil of application. They never caught the patriot spirit of a Junius Brutus, a Cato, or any of the noble personages handed down by Plutarch. But after spending a few years at a public school, to the

injury of their health and principles, in learning a little of the elements of grammar, they rapidly ran through Europe, and then returned to display the effects of their education, their political and philosophical and classical education, in corrupting boroughs, and managing an election. Feeble in mind, feeble in body, their estates and their characters equally ruined, they have nothing to support them but an empty title, the prejudices of the people in favour of birth, and the countenance of any minister, who may make use of them as tools of their ambition.

We give, says Juvenal, to many curs, the noble names of "Lion, Tiger, Leopard." When we call * * * *, * * * * * — * * *, and many others, LORDS, we honour them much

as we do the mangy curs of Juvenal.

If such men multiply, and the modern modes of education and modern manners seem favourable to their multiplication, can we expect that Nobility will be honoured in England any more than it is in France? Be assured, my Lord, that the people will trample coronets under their feet, when they no longer sparkle with the gems of virtue; and wipe off armorial bearings from the coach-doors, which have nothing to authorise them but the venal nonsense of the heralds office.

Such characters alone as that which your Lordship is generously aspiring at, can save the ancient and magnificent

fabric of nobility from falling into ruin under the assaults of common sense, and that free spirit which has born all before it in America and in France. You, and those who like you, consider what it is to be a nobleman indeed; honourable and respectable for your private and personal qualities, amiable and valuable to your generation for beneficent exertions; such only can form columns to support and adorn the splendid edifice. Will titled gamblers, players, grooms, sycophants, borough-mongers, maintain the exclusive privileges of nobility, against the united efforts of a people, who know how to estimate the real value of all political distinctions, and who, burning with a love of liberty, will not fail to destroy a *corrupt* aristocracy,

stocracy, as the natural enemy of every thing TRULY NOBLE?

As I would plant and cultivate the oak of the forest, for the use of our future navies, for the defence and glory of our country; so would I raise and preserve a rising generation of nobles, enlightened with knowledge, animated with virtue, determined to support their eminence of station by eminent desert; and like Corinthian columns in a temple, exhibiting, with the beautiful foliage of the capital, perfect uprightness and solidity.

I look forward with pride and pleasure to that day, when the people will consider your lordship as a support and ornament not only of the

peerage, but of the nation; and if the hand of violence shall be cutting down the ancient tree of nobility, command it to be spared for the golden branch which you, and those who imitate you, shall display to the admiring multitude.

Go, my Lord, I intreat you, and study once more the eighth satire of Juvenal, and commit it to your memory, never to be effaced from the tablet.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

MY LORD,

I Return to our literary correspondence. But I beseech you to interrupt me, when any thing occurs which you think necessary to consider as conducive to the ornament of that illustrious character, A NOBLEMAN IN A FREE COUNTRY.

You desired me, in the last conversation we had, to give you some directions for the formation of your *classical* library. I admire the beautiful room which you have allotted to this purpose. The aspect, which is

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north,

✓ north, I approve, as you will not be incommoded by the sun in the summer, and you can always make it warm enough in winter. The prospect of the fine lawn from the bow-window, with the deer frequently feeding upon it, and the weeping birches, magnificent oaks, and deeply verdant beeches, are objects which you must always contemplate with serene pleasure; a state of mind highly favourable to study.

I wish you to divide your Latin *classical library* into four principal compartments. You do not affect to have a very large or very curious collection of books. You very sensibly wish to have a library for use, rather than ostentation.

Let

Let the first compartment be entitled, "AUCTORES LINGUÆ LATINÆ ÆTATIS AURÆÆ." And here place the works of Cicero complete; Plautus, Terence, Corpus Poetarum, Lucretius, Cæsar, Cornelius Nepos, Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius, Varro, Virgil, Horace, Sallust, Livy, Justin, Cato, Columella, Rei Rustici Scriptores, Vitruvius, and Ovid.

As to the editions, as new ones are frequently coming out, consult your very respectable booksellers, Messrs. Egertons, or Robson, or Payne, or White, and they will inform you with judgment and fidelity. Harwood on the classics, though not without mistakes and improprieties, will be useful to you as a directory;

tory; especially with the additional assistance of the most eminent book-fellers of London. I do not wish you to be a mere book-collector. Get your information of the best editions as easily and as soon as you can, and acquiesce in them. Your lordship's business is to read the contents, and not to dwell on title-pages and dates. Others may perform that ministerial office, unless, from a love of books, you should take delight in the research, as an innocent amusement of your leisure.

The second compartment is to be marked with the title "ÆTATIS ARGENTEÆ;" and must contain, Curtius, Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, Cornelius Celsus, Dictys Cretensis, Phædrus, Seneca Rhetor,

Rhetor, and Seneca Philosophus, Senecæ Tragediæ, Persius, Lucan, Petronius, and Manilius Gratius.

The third compartment includes the authors *ÆTATIS ÆNEÆ*, some of whom deserve a better denomination; particularly the excellent Quintilian, Juvenal, Plinius Major, Plinius Minor, Suetonius, Tacitus, Florus, Statius, Valerius Flaccus, Martialis, and Silius Italicus.

The fourth compartment is of a still lower character, and comprehends the authors *ÆTATIS FERREÆ*; A. Gellius, Apuleius, Tertullianus, Arnobius, Minutius Felix, Vegetius et Frontinus, Lactantius, Censorinus, Aurelius Victor, Symmachi Epistolæ, Macrobius, Ausonius, Prudentius,

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tius, Claudianus, Calphurnius et Numerianus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Apicius, Martianus Capella, Julius Firmicus, and Boethius; and conclude with *Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores*. So much for your Latin classical library. I shall resume the subject of your library in my next letter.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

MY LORD,

IN recommending a library, I do not mean to transcribe a bookseller's catalogue. Books are so numerous in all departments, that I might fill volumes in the enumeration of the titles alone. But yours is to be a *select library*. Your life is to be a life of action, as well as contemplation. You will not crowd your shelves with books, that are valuable only because they are rare or curious. Excellence of composition, and copiousness or authenticity of information, will alone render books valu-

valuable in your opinion. The most excellent books are the commonest. Why became they common? Because they were demanded. And why were they demanded? Because they were well written; illuminated with genius, or furnished with treasures of knowledge.

But I proceed to your Greek classical collection. You are not to be a professor of the Greek language; but as a general and polite scholar, you are to form a just idea of the poets, the orators, the historians, and the philosophers, of that enlightened country. You read Greek with facility; therefore you will not object to admitting the best Greek authors into your library; they will not be strangers to you. Enter therefore

Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Xenophon, Aristophanes, Pindar, Strabo, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Athenæus, Marcus Antoninus, Longinus, Epictetus, Theocritus, Lucian, and Anacreon. Here will be Greek enough; and probably much more than you will be able, in an active life, to read with attention. But you will read something of all of them, that you may not be ignorant of what the world has so long admired, and that you may derive something from them for the improvement of your own style.

There are many other Greek authors of inferior note, whom you will add to your collection, if you find any
occasion

occasion for them, or are impelled by a desire of *singular* eminence in Grecian literature; an ambition which, perhaps, is not to be expected in one who is elevated to high rank, that he may take an *active* part in legislation, and the government of his country. Your models are not a Barnes, a Bentley, a Toup, but a Chatham. Lord Chatham was an excellent scholar, and, I believe, a good Grecian; but, then, he read Greek as a statesman and a philosopher, not as a critic or a grammarian. So will you, my Lord, if you follow the advice of your friend.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

MY LORD,

EXPECT not that I shall assume the office of dictating to you every book which you are to place in your library. Chuse for yourself; go into the booksellers' shops, and make purchases according to your inclination. You will have a great pleasure in exercising your own judgment in selecting your library. You will love your books the better for it, and read them with more avidity. It is a misfortune attending great riches and high rank, that their possessors do not act
 o enough

enough for themselves ; but procure the easiest and pleasantest things to be done for them by their dependents, agents, factors, and officious friends. In vain has Providence given them eyes, hands, and common sense ; they must see, act, and think, by the organs of others. If such be the privilege of noble birth, it should be deprecated as a calamity. The powers of action and of thinking are gifts of nature, superior to any which monarchs have to bestow. Beware of falling into that indolence, to which a facility of obtaining substitutes, in your Lordship's situation, too easily seduces the incautious.

I will not therefore undertake to furnish your English library. Look into the catalogues ; frequent the
shops ;

shops; obtain a knowledge of books sufficient for your purpose, by actual inspection. You will have great pleasure in finding a book you want in a catalogue; and will hasten, with all the ardour of an *amateur*, to purchase it before it is gone. Much literary amusement and knowledge may be acquired by collecting your own books in person. Arrange them according to your own judgment; and let not your library be furnished, as it is papered or painted, by the yard, and without your own interposition.

Maps, charts, chronological tables, globes, telescopes, and all the proper furniture of the library, you will not fail to procure; but you will chuse for yourself by actual observation, and by comparison: the very choice is an

improving amusement; and you will like the various articles better, and use them more attentively, when they have cost you some time, and some pains, in their selection.

Do you not think it a great disgrace to nobility, that certain rich lords (I hope they are few) possess little or no library, never purchase a book, and consider all money thrown away, that is not expended on horses, dogs, wine, and elections? Such men are all body without mind; *corpus sine mente*, as Horace says. But if such should increase, will not the peerage sink in public esteem; and may not an enlightened people rise with indignation, and demolish the aristocracy? Noblemen are lights upon a hill; they attract universal attention.

tion. If their light burns dimly, or emits an evil odour in the socket, there is danger lest it should be extinguished, and the useless beacon levelled with the earth. There are times when the people are ready enough to pay homage to talents and virtue, but they were never less disposed to worship golden calves.

“ Nobility (says Agrippa, as quoted by Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*) is a sanctuary of knavery and haughtiness, a cloak for wickedness, and the execrable vices of pride, fraud, contempt, boasting, oppression, dissimulation, lust, gluttony, malice, ignorance, and impiety.”

God forbid that this representation should be generally just in our country.

try. If the people should be of opinion that it is so at any time, depend upon it the pageant is at an end, and dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, and barons, come off the stage. *Messrs. EGALITES.*

Whether such an event would be beneficial to mankind, I presume not to decide; but I rather wish to preserve any institution that may raise human nature, and stimulate to generous exertion. Such I think the order of nobility, under due regulations; for honour is the nurse of virtue, as well as of the arts.

In the fabric of the political edifice, nobility has been a beautiful and substantial column; may it remain so,
and

and may you, my Lord, form one of its most admired embellishments. In order to be so, much time must be spent in your library. It is MIND, and MIND only, which can give real and lasting dignity. Externals are very proper to set it off, as foils to increase the brilliancy of a jewel; but the foil gives no real value to French paste.

But what shall we say of those noblemen who never read? Their minds are no less coarse and empty than those of their footmen. Let us *bear* with them, however, while we can: but your spirit will, I hope, always keep you distinguished from those that are only to be *tolerated*.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

MY LORD,

AN ancient mansion, or an old oak, UNDECAYED, are venerable. The mind approaches them with a kind of awe. So an ancient family, long famous for its virtues and prosperity, and still flourishing, is naturally productive of esteem. But if the old mansion is reduced to a mere heap of rubbish, and the old oak rotten, we pass them unnoticed, or consider them as incumbrances of the ground. Apply this image to fallen, corrupt nobility.

To

To use a vulgar phrase, you *must* keep it up, my Lord. Send a poor, puny, degenerate lord, descended from the Conqueror, with no abilities of mind and body, and a healthy, virtuous, and able plebeian, into a foreign country, among perfect strangers, without any distinction of dress; and the strangers will soon determine which is the nobleman. Nature produces gold, the king stamps it, and it passes current as a guinea; but if the guinea has been clipt, or if there is too much alloy in it, it will be rejected at the exchange. The pure gold, without any stamp at the *mint*, will always retain its value according to its weight. Stamp your gold, however, with virtuous qualities, such as affability, gentleness, courage, good temper, magnanimity, learn-

learning, eloquence, generosity, and it will never suffer the disgrace of being cut asunder by the sheers, and cast into the crucible.

I am far from disparaging nobility. The times are rather unfavourable to it; and I am endeavouring to render it really venerable, by founding its fancied superiority on real pre-eminence. Noblemen may indeed value themselves highly; but self-value does not increase their real value. Their real value is that alone at which they are esteemed by the public. It is not the feller, but the buyer, that determines the price of a commodity.

Convinced as I am that you have early imbibed these sentiments, I should not inculcate them again, had

your

you not informed me, that two or three young lords, with whom you often associate, had endeavoured to persuade you, that there is a dignity in birth, independent of personal merit, or beneficent exertion. They spend their time chiefly in the stable, at the tavern, and at the gaming-house; they substitute a horse-laugh in the place of all argument; and they would willingly reduce you, by ridiculing your virtues, to a level with their own degenerate state. But what say the people at large, on whom both you and they must depend for a continuance of your honours and privileges? They bid you cast your eyes over the British Channel, and learn in time a lesson of caution.

Only


Only consider the useless life of these young noblemen, whose fortunes are princely, and whose titles, in *sound, right honourable*. They rise at twelve, they dress, they ride, they dine, they game, they go to some public place, they sup, they drink to excess, and then retire again, and renew the same contemptible round on the morrow. Can you wonder that the people view their civil distinctions with an evil eye? When such an one is on his departure, let him take a retrospective view of his life: What have I done? may he ask: my life has been useless to others, and to myself dishonourable. Am I one of the lords of the creation, as well as a lord in civil rank, distinguished above others by my country? If nature had made

me

me a tree, or an animal without reason, I might probably have been more useful than I have been, and more truly estimable.

Never let the false wit and rude conversation of such degenerate nobles, stop you in your honourable career. Treat them with politeness, but act and speak with spirit; and, above all, persevere in the path of honour which you have chosen, and mark the end of your choice.

I am, &c.



LETTER XXXV.

MY LORD,

HEALTH makes the best blood, not nobility. I could not help adopting this idea, on seeing poor Lord * * * * at the coffee-room. He is but two and twenty, and he has all the infirmity of three-score and ten. He was born feeble ; and yet sent early to one of the fashionable schools, because his father and grandfather were educated there. His pockets were full of money, and he indulged himself, in consequence, with every luxury in eating and drinking. High-seasoned food, and brandy and water,

every day, at the age of fourteen !
 Sad havoc it made in his feeble frame !
 A dreadful disease, at sixteen, introduced the decrepitude of old age at twenty-one. And there he stands (and, alas ! can hardly stand) a melancholy example of the folly of parents, in sacrificing the health and happiness of their children to fashion. His servant is the son of one of his tenants, and of the same age as himself. How strong and hale ! how florid his complexion ! how cheerful his looks ! Poor Lord * * * * would give up all his pedigree for half his footman's vigour.

It is a great error of the present age, to bring boys forward too soon. They are made little men, and they continue little men. Unfortunately
 this

this is in a peculiar manner the case of the rich and great. What poor creatures are many who are born to sit in the senate-house, above their fellow-citizens, with coronets and robes of honour! Their whole business is to take care of their health; how can they watch over a nation? They may indeed give a feeble voice at the command of a minister; but will the people respect them? And does not their imbecility of mind and body, besides the great misfortune of it to themselves, endanger the existence of their order, by rendering it contemptible?

Among other modes of restoring lustre to the peerage, if it be true that it is tarnished, care should be taken, in early youth, to prevent the body
from

from being weakened by excess or effeminacy. A school in a great, corrupt, and unhealthy metropolis, should never be chosen by those who are able to select the place of their children's education. The diet of young persons should be plain, yet always plentiful. Early hours of retiring to repose, and rising from it, should be constantly insisted upon. Boys should not be introduced to the luxuries of a nobleman's table, not even their father's, nor suffered to drink wine, or any strong liquor.

Fortunately for you, you were educated in the country, and with rural simplicity of diet and accommodation. You therefore preserved your health, while you acquired those solid accomplishments, which will last you

P

through

through life. But the danger is not yet over: the late hours which modern life renders almost unavoidable, are certainly a deviation from nature, and therefore debilitating. The luxury of the table is also carried to a great height; and excess in wine, at an early age, has become, in certain elevated circles, fashionable.

Be *singular*, my lord, in avoiding such practices as will render you an old man before your time. Take care not to reduce yourself to such a state as may oblige you to become a valetudinarian for life. Strength of body is necessary to strength of mind. Temperance will contribute to both; but let it not run into excess, and become the abstinence of a devotee. And let not your exercise take up all

your time, and serve only, as is the case with some of the fox-hunters, to give an appetite for nocturnal orgies, or the carousals of gross gluttony, and unideal conviviality.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

MY LORD,

You reprimand me in a pleasant style of raillery; and I acknowledge, with justice. I have digressed too long from literary subjects. But you must remember, that when I engaged in correspondence with you, I told you I should not write on a fixed plan, but adopt such subjects as occasionally arose in my own mind, or were suggested by your inquiries.

Every thing connected with the true dignity of nobility falls within

my design. Literature is certainly connected with it most intimately. It opens the eyes to every thing beautiful, to all that is wise and great and good among mankind. It renders one man as superior to another, as man in general is superior to a brute.

But, my Lord, I never intended to make you a *mere scholar*. I wished to furnish you with literature sufficient to enable you, by a *general* knowledge, to prosecute your inquiries with success into all subjects that may solicit your notice; to give you sound principles of arts, sciences, and polite letters; so that you may be able to support your dignity, to serve your country, and to employ

your leisure pleasantly and profitably, without running into intemperance or extravagance merely to pass away your time. I wished you to become a man of science and a man of taste, that you may become amiable in the intercourse of common life, and esteemed and honoured, independently of your birth, in public. I wished you to be able to find the sources of amusement and happiness in yourself, without being driven, in distress for something to do, to mere frivolity. I wished you to find satisfaction in conscious virtue, and in contemplation; and not to depend on others, the paltry ministers of pride and luxury, for the means of avoiding the languor of inactivity. I was desirous that you should lay
up

up a store of ideas for the rest of your life; that you should have means of enjoyment in your library, in times of infirmity, and in old age. My intention was to polish your mind, to *ennoble your heart*; to add weight to your character by solid qualities, and cause the graces of your external manners to be the genuine emanation of internal elegance. Such was my intention in urging you to literary application. You need not fear the being too learned. The manners of the times, and the numerous avocations both of business and pleasure, which you will experience in your exalted rank, will never permit such a degree of application, as can render your learning an incumbrance. The more you

are able to acquire in your youth, depend upon it, the happier and the more honourable you will live. The world values at a high rate the virtuous qualifications of a nobleman. They appear with double lustre in an exalted station, where temptations to idleness and luxury are powerful. Jewels well set in gold are prized beyond the mere intrinsic value.

I hope, therefore, that so long as you enjoy life, health, and your faculties, you will devote some part of the day, however small a part, to the study of science or polite literature. Your acquisitions are already considerable, and constant attention to their preservation and
exten-

extension, will render you, without painful labour, superior in attainments to most of your compeers.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

MY LORD,

IT can scarcely have escaped your observation, that science has been carried to great heights of improvement by men who are enemies to monarchy, enemies to religious establishments, and enemies to the order of nobility. Their knowledge and their virtues have given them a *personal* weight and influence in the world, that few noblemen, however ancient their families, and large their estates, are able to counterpoise. The influence of many noblemen extends scarcely beyond their own tenants,
or

or a few rotten boroughs; but the influence of these *poor plebeians*, ennobled only by their own labours in their libraries, has extended, and is at this moment extending, all over Europe and America. You see political phænomena which our fathers could never have predicted. Extensive empires, without kings, without nobles, without bishops. Whether for the good of mankind or not, it is a wonderful effect of *personal* exertion. Writers may be proud of their power; for they have done what all the kings and nobles in the world, with the assistance of standing armies, could never have effected. Would you avoid INNOVATIONS in England? Would you preserve the magnificent Gothic pile of our ancestors uninjured?

jured? Then add personal merit to the aristocracy. Let genius, learning, and virtue, outshine the pearls and jewels of the peer's coronet; and this country will still, such are its prepossessions in favour of nobility, honour and support it.

To make a solid improvement in *science*, and even to judge of the improvements made by others, it is necessary that you should make a proficiency in Mathematics,; a subject which I shall resume in my next letter.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

MY LORD,

THINK not that I shall advise you to grow pale over complicated diagrams and long calculations, like some poor *philomath*, in the unsocial cells of a college. I recommend the study of the Mathematics to you as preparatory to useful exertions in active life. In the first place, they are the best Logic. They superinduce habits of attention, precision, and accuracy of reasoning, on all subjects which fall under our consideration.

But

But in the next place, they are necessary as instruments in attaining to the noblest sciences. There can be no doubt of their value and utility. Begin then, my Lord, with resolution not to be deterred by the idea of difficulty. There is a delight in the evident truth elicited by this study, which more than repays all the labour. Strong minds love strong exercise, and feel their vigour augmented by a conflict with difficulty.

You are already a proficient in Arithmetic. But you will do well to secure your attainments in this science, by a repetition of your past studies in it. Algebra will next claim your attention; and it is superfluous

fluous to recommend to you the volumes of Professor Saunderson.

If you chuse an easy introduction to the Mathematics, let me recommend to your attentive perusal, the three volumes of Dr. Wells. That author has a clear and very happy mode of instruction. Deep Mathematicians will despise a mere elementary book like his; but you, who are in search of the easiest methods of attaining to science, will condescend to use the most obvious and unostentatious assistance.

After reading Wells, go through Euclid's Elements with close attention; and then, as you are not to be a professor, you will have Mathematics enough for all your purposes.

If,

If, indeed, you feel in yourself a genius for Mathematics, pursue them with the perseverance of a Newton. All natural propensities to science are to be indulged without restraint. But if I were to advise you to involve yourself in the abstruser studies of Mathematics, the utility of which seems to terminate in speculation, what is to become of our statesman, our orator, our patriot? No; life is short, art long, health precious. I cannot urge you to spend your time and spirits in studies, the result of which, after all your labour, will only afford a little amusement to a few recluse students in one or two universities.

The Mathematics you acquire,
are to lead you to judge of Astro-
nomy,

nomy, Navigation, Fortification, Architecture, useful Mechanics, Revenue, Tactics, National Wealth, Arts, and Manufactures.

You must have the assistance of living instructors for improvement in all these branches of knowledge. But the *principles* you must acquire from books. . Cultivate an acquaintance with the ablest men in every department, and their conversation and advice will greatly abridge the labour of study; but study you must in the first instance, in order to be qualified to benefit by their instruction. Happily the nation abounds with men deeply versed in Natural and Experimental Philosophy. A nobleman may easily draw out their rich stores, by soliciting their acquaintance.

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quaintance. It is one great advantage of high rank, that men of merit are always ready to repay the countenance they receive from it, by the most liberal communication of that excellence which their talents and labours have acquired, but which no money can purchase, and no monarch bestow. Let the coronet be respectfully taken off, especially in youth, to plebeian heads adorned with genius and science. It will be replaced, and shine with additional brilliancy.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

MY LORD,

I Did promise you a letter upon History. But why need I urge you to study it? You know its value to a statesman and an orator. It is indispensably necessary. But it is a most extensive field. A life may be spent in traversing it. You never can, consistently with your other engagements, read the history of all ages and all countries. The life of an antediluvian, and the constitution of one, would be necessary to read attentively, all that have been written on *History* alone, much more to

Q 2 study

study all the sciences and parts of knowledge which I have already recommended.

What must be done? *Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo multa?* My Lord, grasp as much as you can; and what you cannot hold or reach, must be suffered to escape. An avarice of knowledge is a laudable avarice indeed; but yet, even here, contentment must be learned, if we would be happy. Alps on Alps arise. But if we cannot reach the summit, we may reach some desirable eminence, enjoy a noble prospect, and sit down, if we are wearied, far more elevated, and more rationally happy than the shepherd in the vale. Our view is greatly extended, though we still know that

our sensible horizon falls infinitely short of the rational.

Let us endeavour to abbreviate our historical labour, by selecting whatever is useful, and foregoing whatever may be dispensed with, though entertaining to the imagination, and calculated to gratify curiosity.

You *must* read the Grecian, the Roman, the English historians, and the history of modern Europe. No man can pretend to letters who is utterly unacquainted with these.

We have abundance of histories of Greece and Rome compiled by the moderns. But my advice is, "go to the fountain-head." Read Hero-

dotus, Thucydides, Livy, and Tacitus; or, if you will drink at the streams, read Rollin; after these read whatever historian you best approve, remembering, as I have more than once repeated, that what you read from choice and inclination, will make the deepest impression, and be retained the longest in the memory. Only give me leave to say, that as there is such choice of historians, you should read those chiefly that have written in the most classical style, lest in acquiring information you contract a barbarism of language, and impede your progress toward one grand purpose of your studies, PARLIAMENTARY ELOQUENCE. Great stores of eloquence are to be derived from Livy. His speeches are
full

full of weight and dignity; and he who can imitate them successfully, will always be impressive.

There is a great deal of history very uninteresting. This must be studied, if studied at all, in chronological tables, and referred to when occasion requires, by dictionaries and indexes. I cannot consent that a warm and vivid genius like yours should be chilled by mere dates, proper names, and dull matters of fact. Survey those historical pictures, where the drawing is strong, and the colouring rich; and you will receive such pleasure as will fix the transactions indelibly in your memory. The faint narrations of uninteresting events will waste your time, and

soon vanish from your mind. They are only fit for dull *matter-of-fact* men.

Modern History, whether from the inferior genius of the historians, or the little heroism of modern manners, is far less striking to the imagination than ancient; but to a statesman it is highly useful. Procure the best historians of every country. Your own will of course claim your peculiar attention. Many complain that we have no good historian of our country. You will consult the most approved; and Fame points them out sufficiently to your notice. Rapin, Hume, Robertson, Smollet, and the authors to whom they refer in their margins, will furnish you with as much knowledge in this province

vince as you can easily retain. As to party, you must judge for yourself how far it misled the minds of these popular writers. As a critic and man of taste, I think you will agree with me that we have not yet a classical writer of English history. Where are the living pictures of Livy? But information must be obtained, whether the modes of receiving are pleasant or disgusting.

Voltaire writes modern history in an entertaining manner; and to him you will have recourse. The difficulty will be to prevail upon yourself to read dull annalists, dreary treaties and negociations, and dry proceedings of councils, conventions, and senates. But if necessary to your own honour and your country's, you will

will submit with patience to the toil:
I wish you soon to emerge from the
dark mine to pleasanter scenes,
where not only reason and memory
are exercised, but the imagination
delighted.

I am, &c.

LETTER XL.

MY LORD,

YOU tell me that you again incurred the derision of your company. They laughed at the downfall of nobility in England. They think it so unlikely as to be next to impossible; and they treated with contempt your wish that they would unite with you in rendering it more respectable in the eyes of the public. They sent you, as you express it, to Coventry; they called you a pedant, and pretended to think you a fool.

These nobles, your companions,
perhaps three or four years ago,
would

would have laughed at the idea of the dethronement of the *Grand Monarque*, and the abolition of nobility in France. They once would have laughed at the idea of American independence. Ridicule is entertaining; but furnishes no argument. You see facts, my Lord, equally, or perhaps more unlikely, than the abolition of nobility in England, have taken place in other countries. It never can be unwise to take timely precautions. All who understand the real state of this country, know that there are many in it who wish to see the order of nobility abolished. They are no less indefatigable than sagacious in pursuing their objects; and the spirit of the times, and the great events which have recently hap-

happened, are certainly favourable to their purposes.

What remains but that the nobility prove to the world that their order is really beneficial to society? And how can they do this more effectually, than by rendering themselves as superior in public virtue and useful learning, as they are in civil pre-eminence? *Personal merit* is a claim to superiority, which the most clamorous leveller cannot dispute. INSIGNIFICANCE, crowned with a coronet, dwelling in a magnificent house, riding in a splendid coach, with arms on the side, and attended with crowds of liveried hirelings, will, in this age, be despised by all who are not in some mode or other paid for their obeisance; and when
this

this contempt becomes general, what shall support an order of men originally raised above their fellows, by an opinion of the superior worth and virtue of their ancestors?

Let your merry companions laugh as they please, they must in their hearts esteem you, and all, who, like you, are endeavouring to equal or to exceed the first founders of their family. Go on then confidently. If any thing can save the tottering fabric from falling, it is such a column, at once graceful and massy, as I hope you will one day appear in the eyes of all men.

Who knows not that human affairs, after our best endeavours, will ever remain far below perfection?

tion? Who requires to be told that man, however elevated, is still an infirm, frail, erring creature; and that noblemen are still subject to all the frailties flesh is heir to? Yet society will always expect, that those who enjoy peculiar privileges should, in the main, and upon the whole, notwithstanding a few exceptions, appear to deserve them, by returning services for advantages enjoyed, and distinctions claimed. What is society the better because certain men are adorned with titles, and eat more delicately, and dwell more sumptuously, and ride more splendidly, and reclining in haughtiness and lazy luxury, look down with contempt on the virtuous and industrious tribes, who, by their labours, are really increasing the comforts of life,

life, and diminishing its evils. Noblemen, regardless of themselves and the public, and degenerated to grooms and gamesters and gluttons, will not be for ever tolerated in a country where taxes are high and the press free. Therefore, if the maintenance of the order is desirable to themselves, they must shake off a most dishonourable indolence, and become what their ancestors were supposed to have been, when they were separated by privileges from the mass of CITIZENS.

Independently of all political considerations, and all regard to the honour and duration of their order, I am sure that as MEN they will feel themselves happier, by a life of active virtue and extensive beneficence.

ficence. There is every reason to urge them to labour in improving their minds and exalting their nature. And as the *corruption of the best things becomes the worst*, degenerate nobility is infinitely baser than plebeian depravity or vulgar insignificance.

I am, &c.

LETTER^d XLI.

MY LORD,

YOUR mention of those companions, who laugh at your regular application to letters, and your generous aspirations after every excellence, leads me to consider the importance of associating with men of enlightened minds and respectable characters.

A Nobleman like you, enjoys the inestimable privilege of selecting his company from the mixed multitude. You are right indeed to select *pleasant* companions; for as
men

men meet in society for mutual delight, the very purpose of their meeting would be frustrated by associating with the morose.

But be assured that the pleasantness of a companion does not always depend upon his levity. Mirth and jollity may pass away a vacant hour in thoughtlessness; but good sense, information, taste, and wit, are necessary to give society its highest relish. Remember too, that your company should have the advantage of *character*, if you value your own.

I hope therefore, that you will not give yourself up, like some whom the public speaks of freely,

to the society of men whose knowledge is confined to jockeyship, making of bets, feasting, playing, boxing, cock-fighting, cricketing, and other frivolous amusements, from which the people at large can receive no advantage; which often promote riot and disorder; which produce no good and mitigate no evil. Are noblemen allowed exclusive privileges, and loaded with riches and honours, that they may patronize and countenance those whom the middle rank, occupied in honest industry, consider as little better than vagabonds and outcasts of society? They may be pleasant, honest fellows in their way, but the public despises them; and they will involve those of the nobility who are
always

always seen with them, in that contempt into which themselves have fallen, never more to rise.

It is said that very great men often delight in the company of very little men, and that princes and nobles are remarkable for their attachment to worthless company. What can be the causes? Among others, this perhaps is one. Nobles, not furnished with personal merit corresponding with their elevation, are afraid of sinking in the presence of persons who are distinguished by great talents natural and acquired. To preserve their rank at the convivial table, they think it best to associate with men whose humble acquirements and contemptible characters

do not encroach upon their self-importance. But this is a double misfortune; a misfortune to themselves, who are thus excluded from the pleasure and advantage of company really good; and a misfortune to men of merit, who are suffered to live unpatronized and unnoticed by those, who lavish all their favours on their contemptible parasites. There is no conduct of the nobility which exasperates the honest and independent part of the people more, than this degrading predilection for men, who, however pleasing they may be as buffoons, are devoid of all qualities which excite *public* respect, and promote *public* benefit.

Such is my opinion of your good sense, and of the taste for excellence
which

which you have imbibed from a voluntary perusal of the best authors, that I hope and think my admonitions on this subject may be unnecessary. But the example of young men of your own rank is seducing, and I am unwilling to omit any topic that may be beneficial.

Let me then exhort you to form a habit of association with men of letters and science, with men eminent in the liberal professions, with men whom the public esteems, and on whose account the public will esteem you, if you are known to seek and to enjoy their conversation.

“The feast of reason,” is one of the most delightful pleasures allowed

to man in this imperfect state. Invite guests who are able to bring their share of the entertainment. Keep open house for all who come recommended by indubitable merit. But take care not to admit forward pretenders, who will be the first to rush in, to the entire exclusion of modest unpretending men, who must be drawn with a kind of gentle violence from their obscurity.

Patronize real worth. How few among the nobility are patrons of illustrious merit? There are who pretend to be so, and bestow their favours on *doubtful claims*; on men who are chiefly remarkable for a mean obsequiousness, and whom the *public* scarcely recognize as men of any merit at all. There is an honest
pride

pride in real worth which delights in independence, and scorns to solicit favours of the unworthy. This pride, though really estimable, offends the little minds of narrow nobility. Men of great merit are therefore kept at a distance; while sycophantic pretenders, favoured by the ignorance as well as mean spirit of titled persons, (for to call them *noble* would be a misnomer,) enjoy the hospitality, the conversation, and the lucrative appointments of those who are raised to *higher ground*, that they may see, and seeing, may reward all real virtue in the vale beneath them.

As you must have observed how this conduct degrades individual noblemen, and disgraces the order,

order, you will, notwithstanding the force of example, carefully avoid it. *Maccenas*, though a coxcomb, had sense enough to patronize such men as *Horace*; and their merit has *ennobled* with immortality of fame his native insignificance.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLII.

MY LORD,

I HAVE not forgotten that I promised you a letter on Philosophy. Her name is abused in the present age, but she herself must ever be estimable. True philosophy is true wisdom.

Many men assume to themselves the title of philosophers, who are very superficially furnished with learning or science ; and who rely entirely on the strength of their own reason, and the short experience of their own lives. As an instance of their superiority,

periority, they controvert all the opinions which have been long established among mankind, as PREJUDICES. They may sometimes be right in abstract theory; but they would do well to consider whether the removal of *prejudices*, which for ages have been found beneficial to mankind at large, conducive to good order, exciting merit, raising emulation, and affording comfort and amusement, is not as unworthy of philosophy, as it is of benevolence. Austere in their manners, uncandid in their judgment, dogmatical in their doctrines, they are not to be imitated by a learned, generous, liberal-minded, good-natured NOBLEMAN. Their philosophy is not the philosophy which I recommend to your lordship. It is too mean for a mind

mind cultivated by elegant letters, polished by the fine arts, and attentive to whatever embellishes as well as informs the fine faculties of the human intellect. It is founded on metaphysical refinement, narrow calculation, parsimonious œconomy, and, upon the whole, unfit for a creature furnished with fine feelings and an imagination, as well as with reason. It allows nothing to ornament, little to pleasure, and keeps the eye steadily fixed, like the sordid miser, on mere worldly utility. It is inimical to the honourable distinctions of rank. It would strip all the gold and carving from the roof, as an appendage which adds nothing to the solidity of the edifice.

You,

You, my Lord, will derive your philosophy from the sources of all elegance, the polished writers of the best ages of antiquity. You will find a spirit in them which ennobles man's nature. Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, and those of the moderns who have trod in their footsteps, will be your masters in philosophy; and while you catch their sentiments, you will imitate their example. They were *noble* by Nature's patent. They stand among the *minute* philosophers of recent times, like giants among pigmies.

— Their's is the school for the acquisition of dignity. Greatness of soul is more necessary to make a great man, than the favour of a monarch and the blazonry of the herald;
and

and greatness of soul is to be acquired by converse with the heroes of antiquity; not the *fighting* heroes only, but the moral heroes; those who wrote and acted with a grace and spirit which few modern philosophers of the *minute* school, with all their assuming pretensions, have fully understood, or been able to emulate.

To the ancients I refer you for a just taste of the beautiful and sublime in manners and morals, as well as in composition. Plato, Xenophon, Plutarch, Tully, Seneca; be these your guides in philosophy. After drinking at their fountains, you will learn not to overvalue the shallow streams and narrow rivulets of the *soi-disant* philosophers of recent times.

You

You will have a touchstone to discriminate infallibly between gold and baser metal. You will see the essential difference, however speciously disguised, between sophistry and philosophy.

Under philosophy in this letter, your own good sense will inform you, that I do not mean natural and experimental philosophy. The moderns excel the ancients in these particulars, as much as manhood usually excels childhood, or adolescence.

I mean the philosophy which Cicero calls *vite dux, virtutis indagatrix*; and of which he says, in a beautiful apostrophe to her, *Tu inventrix legum, tu magistra morum et discipline*.

cipline. Est autem unus dies bene ex preceptis tuis ætus—peccanti immortalitati antefereendus.

It is that philosophy which separates, by a moral chemistry, truth from falsehood, right from wrong, dispelling the clouds of error, and dissolving the enchantments of fancy.

To her guidance I commend you, my Lord, and doubt not but that she will conduct you to the *PULCHRUM ET HONESTUM*, to all that truly ennobles human nature. She will lead you, I hope, ultimately to what modern philosophy explodes, the *CHRISTIAN RELIGION*.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

MY LORD,

YOU think I am beginning to preach, when I mention Religion. But why a prejudice against any mode of instruction? Indulge it not; for it is unworthy a man of sense, and a philosopher.

I *am* indeed going to preach, if to recommend Religion be to preach. You may be a good man, and a happy man, without *nobility*, without learning, without eloquence; but you cannot be either without Religion. Without Religion there will be a root

of

of bitterness shooting up amidst your choicest fruits, that will not fail to spoil their flavour. Those who possess the largest share of the world, and are totally immersed in its pleasures, are not so happy upon the whole, as the contented peasant with his *piety*.

For your own comfort therefore, I trust you will cultivate a spirit of devotion; that you may enjoy peace of conscience, and the sweet hope of protection from the King of kings, in the thousand sorrows which, as you are not destitute of sensibility, you will feel in the course of a *chequered life*. High as you are, you are not out of the reach of misfortune. Those you love as your own soul may die before you, or be afflicted with pain and disease that admit of no alleviation.

leviation. You may drink deeply of the bitter cup yourself. Years of pain may be your lot. Your senses will certainly decay, if you live long. The world with its pomps and vanities will gradually vanish from you, like a cloud in a summer evening, tinged with gold and purple.

Is it not worth while to cultivate in youth a devotional taste, which in health and prosperity will furnish you with great pleasure; and in distress, sickness, age, and death, with solid comfort, when nothing else can give any delight; but when grandeur, as well as riches, will appear despicable vanity?

And look a little beyond this world, (and leave it you must, whether you chuse it or not,) and see what scenes Religion opens to the

the eye of faith! Hope points to them in the last agonies of expiring nature. Were it but a delusion, (and you can never be sure that it is not a reality, without an immediate revelation,) it would be worthy of cherishing in this mortal state: but that it is not a delusion you have great reason to believe, because it is supported by strong arguments; because the best and most enlightened men of all ages have been religious, and on their death-beds, in their last accents, have left a testimony in its favour.

But if you dislike preaching, I doubt not but you have a peculiar objection to long sermons. To conclude therefore,

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

MY LORD,

THE subject of my last is of too much consequence not to be resumed.

Man is instinctively a religious animal. Others approach him in reason, but none have an idea of a God. Many of them, as the dog, look up to man with a species of adoration, resembling that with which he looks up to the Deity. This religious instinct in man is a certain proof of that dignity of human nature, which the modern philosophers are endeavouring to depreciate.

But those who claim a dignity among their fellow-creatures, will never, if they are wise, study to lower
the

the dignity of the *whole race*. If there be no dignity in human nature, there can be none in any partaker of it. Nobles will act wisely in maintaining Religion in its full vigour, if they should be actuated solely by selfish or political motives.

If man be a reptile, incapable of sustaining a character at once good and great, how ridiculous to put a coronet on his head, and clothe him in purple! They are the greatest levellers, who aim at levelling man with the brute. If we are all asses, no ass among us will long be permitted to wear a lion's skin.

Indeed, poor human nature, with all its dignity, stands in need of every support to prevent it from falling beneath itself. Whatever

can raise it from the savage and barbarous state, ought to be cherished. The wild crab-stock must be grafted with the pippin.

I wish your Religion not to be a political one, but the spontaneous growth of a good and feeling heart. Yet even a political reverence for the Religion of your country is far more honourable to a Nobleman, raised or maintained as he is in his elevation for his supposed virtue, than an open contempt of it. Depend upon it, that some instances of this sort have given disgust to the people. All the eloquence and ability of Bolingbroke have not been able to rescue his name from infamy. And what will be thought of those little great men, who blaspheme in public, and avow themselves infidels, with scarcely any learning,

ing, and no peculiar share of common sense? Such men are sapping the foundations of nobility, on which it has stood firmly for ages.

A Religion too *evidently* political will usually be frustrated. The public, ever keenly penetrating into the conduct of distinguished personages, will see that it is merely political, and then what becomes of the policy of it? It may do more injury than open impiety, because it renders all professions of Religion throughout society suspected of policy, and causes Religion itself to be considered as a state engine. The engine will lose its spring, and become a piece of lumber, when once this suspicion is universal.

Be therefore in truth what you wish to appear. Are you exempted from the common lot of hu-

manity? Do you not want consolation which the world often has not to give? None are more wretched than the great. A thousand causes increase that portion of misery in them, of which all mortals must partake. They want the spur to industry which urges their inferiors to action, and consequently makes them happy. Their appetites are palled with abundance. They are exposed to a thousand temptations, happily unknown to the vulgar. They are often brought up in ignorance of all things, but those which solicit their senses. And shall they, proud of a little temporary distinction, despise that which myriads of their fellow-creatures have found to be a light to lighten their paths; a medicine for sickness of mind, the most distressing of all
lan-

languors ; a vulnerary to heal the severest wounds of the bosom ?

You have too much sense not to see the vanity of all human things ; the brevity of life ; the weakness of man in his best estate ; the poverty of riches, and the littleness of grandeur. Seeing and feeling these things, you will aspire at something greater, something better, something more satisfactory and more durable, than this fading scene, and this perishable body, are able to afford. You will see a sublimity in Religion, a true grandeur in all its views ; and you will wish to be impressed with it, that your soul, your very essence may be refined, sublimed, and truly ennobled. Little minds, the half learned, the empty and the conceited, are the pronest to infidelity and irreligion.

A really

A really great mind, a mind adorned by the lights of learning, and a heart finely sensible of all that in its most perfect state it ought to feel, will acknowledge with all humility its own want of support, and aspire with ardent hope to the favour of the Deity.

And let me intreat you to keep in mind, that religious impressions must be stamped early in life; because there is great danger that the heart may become too much hardened in the world, to admit them in advanced age. The sooner you adopt pious sentiments, the better: but because the outward appearances of Religion are often suspicious, often the cloaks of hypocrisy, you will take care to avoid the ostentation of piety. Indeed, there is not much danger of it in the present times: it is so much exploded

exploded in some circles in high life, that many a young man of gaiety and fashion would rather be suspected of every extravagance and folly, than of saying his prayers, or paying a *sincere* respect either to the public or private offices of devotion. To avoid the suspicion of hypocrisy, your piety will be more in your heart than on your tongue; and your intercourse with Heaven will be carried on with little other privacy, (except on Sundays and in the church,) than that of your own conscience.

This subject is too extensive and too important for a familiar letter; I can only give you hints upon it; you must improve them by reading and reflection. Give me leave to send
you

you for instruction to the great matters of theology in our own language; to BARROW, whose copious eloquence would adorn a senate; to SOUTH, whose wit, and sound argument, and energetic style, will improve you in speaking, while it convinces your reason, confirms your faith, animates your zeal, and inspires your heart with manly sentiments of duty to yourself, your neighbour, and your God. I mention eloquent writers, that you may not lay aside a volume of sermons, with the usual complaint of dullness. More lively writers than Barrow and South are not to be found in the English language. I fear, if I should recommend dull tomes of divinity, however sound, I should stand no chance of being regarded.

But

But why should you not have a theological library? Do you think divinity concerns the clergy only? It concerns man, as man; and he has poor pretensions to the character of a Nobleman, whose narrow, prejudiced mind leads him to think, that divinity is interesting to none but men who follow it as a lucrative profession.

Hebrew I do not recommend to you; because you cannot comprehend in your plan every thing that is desirable. But pray furnish yourself with a Septuagint bible, a Latin bible, and an English one of the best edition. Procure Wetstein's and Bengelius's testaments. Set apart a bookcase in your library, for the best writings of celebrated laymen of our own country in divinity; such as Locke, Addison, Nelson,

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Nelson, West, and Lyttelton : and be not ashamed of admitting among them, the celebrated writers of sermons, whose compositions, considered only as fine pieces of literature, deserve a place in every good library.

The time may come, when you will find this part of your collection the most agreeable. In old age it will furnish much comfort. Happy for you it will be, if in your youth you divest yourself of those prejudices against Religion and religious books, which, unworthy as they are of a truly philosophic and noble mind, are cherished as marks of superiority over the VULGAR ! You must die like the vulgar ; you have nerves susceptible of pain and languor like the vulgar ; you may be judged and condemned

-demned like the vulgar; deign therefore to worship and obey the God of the vulgar. Before His eyes in what light do you think appear coronets, ribands, and stars? A book, of some authority with the people, though sometimes neglected by the great, says, "Not many *noble* are called." —That they are not, must be their own fault, for God is no *respector of persons*.

I am, &c.



LETTER XLV.

MY LORD,

GIVE me leave to write you one more letter on Religion, and I will desist, lest I should find you throw away my letters, as you say Lord *** did your Barrow's Sermons, when he called upon you to desire you to take ten guineas worth of tickets for the benefit of Signior ****.

A Nobleman has no right to retain his distinctions, when he refuses to perform on his part those duties in society, which the conferring or continuing of those distinctions tacitly requires

quires of him. He promises, by retaining the honours bestowed, to reflect a lustre back again on his country; and to contribute what he can to the maintenance of its constitution, both civil and ecclesiastical. An open avowed contempt of the religious ordinances of a country, where he is peculiarly favoured, is an insult which the people feel, and when opportunity offers, will shew that they can resent, by degrading his order.

What think you then, my Lord, of the fashionable practice among Nobles, of selecting Sunday, in preference to all other days, for travelling? What passes on Sundays within the walls of our Patricians' mansion-houses, even if it should be improper, (which is not to be uncha-

ritably furnished,) when it is not seen by the public, may neither do them harm by the example, nor degrade Nobility in their opinion. But splendid equipages flying about the country on Sundays, during divine service, with coronets on the coach doors and on the horses caparisons, betray an *insolence*, which the majesty of a people, not yet lowered by ATHEISM, will one day curb, in a manner which may render the Lordlings who *sport them*, objects of pity. The honest husbandman stops his plough, the weaver his loom, the smith quenches his fire, and the carpenter lays down his hammer, in obedience to the laws of his country, and for the preservation of decorum; but the great Lord in the neighbourhood, an hereditary maker and guardian

dian of the laws, and one who expects great worship to be paid to himself, sets out on Sunday, on his journey to London or a place of amusement; though, as he is totally unemployed, he might, with equal convenience to himself, travel on any other day. He takes with him five or six menial servants, and six or seven horses, who are driven with cruel haste, as if life and death depended on the saving of an hour; when the whole business of the journey is, that one Lord may sit down and eat and drink with another Lord, then yawn on a sofa, and finish the evening with faro. Should an aristocracy thus insult a generous and *religious* people, let it not imagine itself founded on a rock.

If Nobles are anxious to hand down their honours, as they received them, unfulfilled and unimpaired, let them pay a scrupulous regard to public decorum. A free people will not for ever be insulted by those, whose useless state, and luxurious indolence, they support by their labour. Some Nobles may thank themselves alone for that levelling spirit, which prevails in Europe, and, without great efforts of virtue among the Nobles, will triumph.

I hope, for your own sake, you will not have routs and card-parties on Sundays; but that you will spend the day according to the laws and customs of your country: however, if you will not do so for your own sake, let me prevail with you to do it for the
sake

sake of *your order*; and for the sake of the common people, who have their eyes fixed on your conduct, and, in spite of all laws and all advice, will imitate it, though they despise it in you, and though it tends to the destruction of their health, their characters, and their properties. If you wish yourself and your posterity to preserve the nobility you inherit, support it, my Lord, by behaviour uniformly noble, and *publicly decorous*, as well as privately good, and internally honest. *Let your light shine before men*, or it may be extinguished.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

MY LORD,

PRIDE often affects to despise, and may sometimes really despise, popularity. But it is a silly pride; for what is popularity but the favour, the love, and the esteem of the people; those of our fellow-creatures who are destined to exist on this globe at the same time with ourselves, and who have it greatly in their power to render our lives comfortable or uncomfortable, honourable or disgraceful? Next to the approbation of our God and our consciences, is the esteem of our fellow-creatures.

Every

Every Nobleman should endeavour to be popular. If his disposition lead him to rural retirement, yet he should become the favourite of his neighbourhood, beloved by the poor, and esteemed by all. Is this commonly the case? Go into countries where mansion-houses of the nobility abound; ask the neighbours their opinion of the lord at the great house. A shake of the head often speaks eloquently, when the tongue, through fear of the *great man's* persecution, is compelled to be silent. But, in general, the neighbours neither love nor fear the great man, and are loquacious enough at his expence. "My Lord is very strict about the game," says one. "My Lord does but little good with his great fortune," says another. "My Lord is scarcely ever here," says

says a third, "but always in London, or at a watering-place."—"So much the better," cry they all, "for he gives nothing away, and associates with few but gamblers, who follow him into the country, as the crow follows the carrion." The *great man* brings London with him to the sweet village retreat, where nature and simplicity once reigned, but whence they are driven by false refinement, or gross luxury. The pleasures he enjoys there are all selfish, or confined to a circle of companions, whom the country-people view with contempt or hatred. What becomes of his popularity? He despises it—he is above it. The low people in his neighbourhood, even those who *are* what his ancestor *was*, are beneath his notice. The contempt is reciprocal. His Lordship

ship will do them no good, and he can do them no hurt; but they have it in their power to injure him deeply, by speaking of him on all occasions disrespectfully. Thus, his character suffers; and his HONOUR, one of the most valuable possessions of a Nobleman, is sullied by foul aspersions. The very order is held in contempt on his account; and, however he may despise this evil, yet let him be assured, that it is in its consequences of considerable magnitude. The contempt spreads, from a rural neighbourhood, to the whole community; as the undulating circles, caused by the falling of a pebble into a pond, extend themselves gradually to its remotest margin.

I ad-

I advise *you* therefore, my Lord; *you*, who are willing to retard the degradation of Nobility, to reside at your provincial mansion in a style of magnificence adequate to your rank and fortune, and with an hospitality and beneficence that may compel ENVY herself to acknowledge, that you are no less noble in your nature, than by the accident of primogeniture in a patrician family.

The English are still attached to illustrious birth, and if it is accompanied with any virtue, pay it great respect. How unfortunate, that some nobles do all they can to eradicate the prejudices, which the people retain for them, by shewing that they have no pretensions to distinction or superiority, but the wretched ones of

an *hereditary* fortune, which they dissipate in mischief, and an *hereditary* title, to which they are a disgrace !

A Nobleman in the country should be looked up to by the vulgar with admiration, by the gentlemen and clergy with esteem and affection, and considered by all, as the UNIVERSAL FRIEND ; and this, not for the paltry purposes of a county or borough election, but for the sake of supporting the dignity which the laws of his country have consented that he shall inherit or possess, certainly not for his own good only, but for the good of the society. Why should I agree, says a free citizen, to exalt my fellow-creature above me, unless I am to enjoy the
benefit

benefit of his protection, his bounty, or his good example ?

Largeesses bestowed for the sake of influencing votes, or condescension shewn at the approach, or at the time of an election, gain no permanent popularity : they are seen through, and known to proceed from selfishness, meanness, and a contemptuous opinion of the very persons to whom they are offered. They are a cheap and dishonourable way of purchasing favours that cannot be bought and sold without betraying the country. Your kindness will proceed from true generosity ; noble in your sentiments, noble in your actions, noble in your family, you will shew your compeers what it is to be *right honourable*. The people, instead of
divesting

divesting you, will wish to bind your brows with a brighter diadem than the coronet. I trust to your natural disposition, and to your education, that even if Nobility is to be abolished, the historian, who records the event, will express regret that you could not be exempted from the degradation. Indeed, you cannot be degraded. Your title may be withdrawn, your armorial ensigns effaced, but such nobility as yours will emblazon itself. It will, if any thing can, redeem the whole order. Such, I know, is your ambition. Indulge it; and thus emulate, equal, and surpass, the ancestor who founded your house.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

MY LORD,

I Never said that aristocracy or nobility was necessary or useful in a state. It is a question which I mean not to discuss. All I contend for is, that it cannot subsist long in any free country like our own, (especially since the example of France,) when unsupported by personal merit; a merit as distinguished as the rank, and titles, and privileges, with which it is honoured. Do you think, in this age, that a peerage given to a man because he is *enormously rich*, and has employed his riches in *corrupting boroughs*

roughs for a number of years to serve a minister, confers such honours as the people venerate? Such peerages are objects of *derision* among all but servile dependents, or mean and weak admirers of false grandeur. If they were unfortunately to multiply too fast, there is no doubt but they would accelerate a total abolition of such distinctions, like that which has happened, contrary to the expectations of most men, in a country which once idolized Nobility.

Riches and honours, united to personal merit, will always command unlimited respect. The riches acquire double value, the honours double lustre, when accompanied with weight and brilliancy of character. On the other hand, it must be owned,

that personal merit appears to very great advantage, when the splendor of those showy externals throws a kind of sunshine upon it. A very little merit is magnified to a very extraordinary size, when united with birth and fortune; and great merit is then sure to have ample justice done it. What an encouragement this, for Noblemen to labour in their youth in acquiring

PERSONAL MERIT?

But you justly observe, that if learning is a constituent part of this merit, it must happen among Noblemen, as among all other men, that the parts necessary to acquire learning may be deficient, or may not rise above mediocrity. How then shall they acquire this personal merit, in which alone true nobility is said to consist?

Personal merit, my Lord, is of a very extensive nature. A lord, we all know, may be, as well as a plebeian, a dunce; but he may still have a great deal of such merit as will vindicate himself and his order from contempt. He may *do good* in every *usual* way, though he has not abilities to strike out new modes of doing it.

If abilities are rather deficient, he may still rely for respect, with full security, on the virtues. To do good by his property, by his influence, and by his example, requires not the *abilities* of an orator, or a great statesman. Let him mean well in all his conduct, and the world will make every due allowance for the defects of nature.

But if, in despair of shining in his proper sphere, he descends to the low company and amusements of *pugilists*; appears in public with sharpers, buffoons, grooms, horse-dealers, and jockies; avoids men of sense; gives no encouragement to useful or polite arts; and degrades himself by coarse mirth, childish pranks, by excess of drinking, or any other vice; then his nobility only serves as a torch to shew in a more glaring light his foul depravity.

The public, considering how frail and imperfect human nature ever has been, will candidly pardon, in the peerage, a few instances of such degeneracy. They will not expect superior wisdom from men who are known to be naturally below the
rank

rank of common men in ability, though accidentally raised above it in station. The peerage will not be abolished on their account, if the men of parts, like your Lordship, exert themselves to render it, upon the whole, useful and honourable in the eyes of their countrymen.

But let those who cannot shine, endeavour to be useful. BENEFICENCE, in a Nobleman of dull intellect, or poor attainments, if exerted without *election views*, will cause him to be loved and honoured in his generation. Let those who cannot say good things, do them; and the applause, though not so obstreperous, will be more lasting and general.

The public, my Lord, require nothing unreasonable. They wish those whom they have raised above themselves, not to sink below themselves by a voluntary indolence and depravity. They wish to see them stimulated by the virtue of their ancestors to higher improvements than others, both moral and intellectual. They wish to see Nobility, like Wisdom, justified by her children; and, if these wishes are never likely to be gratified, but men are to degenerate in their natural rank in proportion as they are raised in their civil, they then wish to see Nobility extinct, an incumbrance cleared away, and the honour of human nature and society vindicated, by the removal of a nuisance.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

MY LORD,

I AM well aware that a Nobleman is but a man, and that a patent of peerage is not an APOTHEOSIS. Perfection is not to be required. I never aimed at an Utopian Nobility. A degree of personal merit, far below what appears in many plebeians whom we every day meet with in our common intercourse with mankind, will render a Nobleman truly respectable. But the more merit he is able to acquire, the more honour, the more true Nobility will he possess; and the complexion of the times is such,

U A

that

that PERSONAL MERIT was never more necessary to secure the permanency of the peerage, and to obviate the objections of shrewd and successful innovators. You agree with me in this opinion. The occurrences of the present moment prove it to be founded. Then go on in your virtuous progress, unretarded by those who say that our fears are groundless, or by those who laugh at your virtuous solicitude.

Let us proceed on the subject of your studies. You tell me, you have begun reading *Taylor's Elements of Civil Law*, which I recommended to you when I last saw you. It is indeed a book admirably well adapted to the purposes of a noble student like you, whose object is to be an efficient legislator,

gillator, an enlightened statesman, a patriot unbiaſſed by party. To ſo good a claſſic as your Lordſhip, it muſt afford a rich entertainment, in the fine and numerous quotations from thoſe patterns of elegance, the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is not prejudice or pedantry which extolls them. They are as ſuperior *in ſtyle* to moſt of the modern philoſophers, politicians, poets, orators, and hiſtorians, as gold is to ſilver. Their language gave them that advantage, and the pains they took in compoſition, produced a ſolidity of thought, as well as a highly finiſhed expreſſion.

Pray turn frequently to the authors referred to in the margin of Dr. Taylor's learned treatiſe. Procure a volume interleaved, and write
your

your remarks copiously. I am a little selfish in that request; for the sight of it will afford me much pleasure, as the exercise itself will doubtless promote your own improvement. You will not consider Dr. Taylor's book as a complete treatise. It is a good common-place book in civil law; and if you examine the books to which it refers, you will possess every means of the best information in this department. You will find it an excellent collection of materials. d

You have taken my advice, you say, and bought the whole works of Plutarch. You have bought a rich treasure. Plutarch is a most valuable author; full of fine sense and fine writing, too much neglected by modern readers and the self-taught philo-

philosophers. LORD CHATHAM said in the House of Commons, that the *most instructive book he ever read was Plutarch's Lives*. But the miscellaneous treatises of Plutarch abound in excellent sense, and are perhaps better worth your reading than his *Lives*. We have no good translation of Plutarch, and therefore you must read him in the original. Many and great beauties of style you will find in Plutarch, though the critics have decried it in general, with a traditional obsequiousness to an erroneous opinion, hastily advanced, and not sufficiently examined.

Dwell with the sages of antiquity. You will become one of them; and adding all the dignity of a Roman, to the lights and polish of a high-born
and

and high-bred Englishman, you will be one of the pillars of your country, and ornaments of the human race. May I live to see it; and have the satisfaction of thinking that my counsel contributed in some degree to finish the gorgeous column!

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIX.

MY LORD,

I Met with the following passage in Lord Bolingbroke's "*Idea of a Patriot King*," on the *behaviour of Princes*; and as it is equally applicable to *Nobles*, I shall transcribe it for your consideration.

" Let not PRINCES flatter themselves. They will be examined closely in private as well as in *public life*; and those who cannot pierce further, will judge of them by the *appearances* they give in both. To obtain true popularity, that which is founded in esteem and affection,

affection, they must therefore maintain their characters in *both*, and to that end neglect appearances in neither; but observe the *decorum* necessary to preserve the esteem, whilst they win the affections of mankind. *Kings*, they must never forget that they are *Men*; *Men*, they must never forget that they are *Kings*. The sentiments which one of these reflections of course inspires, will give an humane and affable air to their whole behaviour, and make them taste in that high elevation all the joys of social life. The sentiments which the other reflection suggests, will be found very compatible with the former; and they must never forget that they are *Kings*, though they do not always carry the crown on their heads, nor the sceptre in their hands. Vani-
nity

nity and folly must entrench themselves in a constant affectation of state; to preserve regal dignity. A wise Prince will know how to preserve it when he lays his majesty aside. He will dare to appear a private man, and in that character he will draw to himself a respect less ostentatious, but more real, and more pleasing to him, than that which is paid to the monarch. By never saying what is unfit for him to say, he will never hear what is unfit for him to hear. By never doing what is unfit for him to do, he will never see what is unfit for him to see. Decency and propriety of manners are so far from lessening the pleasures of life, that they refine them, and give them an higher taste. They are so far from restraining the free and easy commerce of social life, that they banish
the

the bane of it, licentiousness of behaviour. Ceremony is the barrier against this abuse of liberty in public, politeness and decency are so in private; and the PRINCE, *who practises and exacts them, will amuse himself much better, and oblige those who have the honour to be in his intimacy, and to share his pleasures with him, much more than he could possibly do by the most absolute and unguarded familiarity.*"

The sentiments of the above passage I chose rather to express in the words of a celebrated Nobleman than in my own, that they might have the greater authority.

But let me appeal to your own reflection, Do you not think that great men, by breaking down the outworks
of

of their grandeur, have endangered the citadel? Do you not think, that if an audience is permitted to go behind the curtain and the scene, much of the *stage effect* will be lost? And have you not observed, that many persons in very high stations have stript off all their external state, dressed in a style of vulgarity, associated with persons of no respectable character, played *in public* at low, degrading games, and pursued vulgar and barbarous diversions? They must have a very great fund of *personal superiority* to maintain, under all this voluntary abasement, the superiority which their titles arrogate, and their country allows. But unfortunately, such humiliation, such company, such amusements, have a tendency to destroy whatever personal merit, education, or

early habits may have produced or improved. Nobility has let itself down, and perhaps will find it difficult to rise to its primitive elevation. What is once despised seldom resumes its honours. Contempt, like the breath of the south, taints the purest viands; and no art can restore them. That too much familiarity breeds contempt, the observation of mankind has reduced to a proverbial maxim. An institution founded, like Nobility, on opinion, must be supported by opinion; and so weak is human nature, that a little paint and gilding is necessary to preserve many estimable things in a due degree of esteem. We are not yet a nation of philosophers; but we are a nation of acute observers and jealous politicians. Those who wish to enjoy the privileges of
great

great rank, must be contented to wear some of its drapery, though it may feel like an incumbrance. Strip man of his dress—and what a poor puny biped!

There is an inflation of character, an empty pomp, as far from true greatness, as the unwieldy size of a bloated glutton from the plump condition of sound health. This is displayed by men of great pride and little ability. The dignity I advise you to assume is the natural result of internal greatness; it fits easy, it gives no offence, it pleases because it is becoming, and every body pays it a *willing* deference.

Such Nobility is of indisputable service to society. It raises a virtuous
 x 2 emulation.

emulation. It appears with a grave and venerable air, which places the human species in a most favourable light; and by exhibiting appearances of perfection, facilitates the approach to it. Men will always imitate what they sincerely admire. But asses in lions skins invite the contumelious kick of every mean quadruped. I am happy that you have already taken care that no one can justly say that you have disgraced your ancestors by voluntary degradation.

I am, &c.

LETTER L.

MY LORD,

SINCE the first institution of Nobility, a new race of *Nobles* (pardon my calling them so) has arisen among us, unknown and unforeseen by our early progenitors. Commerce, manufactures, and our East India connections, have raised great numbers to *princely* opulence, and princely state, whom the ancient Nobility would have retained in the humblest obscurity as vassals; whom too many among the modern Nobility would, if possible, keep down by contempt and neglect. I say, if possible;

fible; but really, my Lord, it is impossible. Wealth, in a free country, will give power; and power, every real privilege of Nobility, but the title, a poor claim to universal respect. What, then, of substantial superiority have the ancient Nobility, if they do not REBUILD THE HONOUR OF THEIR HOUSES on the basis of their OWN PERSONAL MERIT? In wealth they are excelled by multitudes. In external pomp, in equipages, in mansions and attendants, in all that fascinates the vulgar, they are exceeded. Nothing *exclusive* remains, but the fancied advantage of *patrician blood* flowing in their veins; an advantage, if it be one, which does the *public no service*, and administers to little else but an empty pride. PERSONAL MERIT, however, united to
this

this fancied advantage, and the distinction of a title, will come recommended strongly to the prejudices of mankind; - and there appears to me no other method of restoring the lustre of the coronet, than by adding to the number of its *real jewels*. False glitter will no longer pass undetected. Intellectual attainments, and patriotic exertions, will still keep the rich plebeians, who are treading upon the heels of Nobility, at a convenient distance. But the purpose cannot be served by insolence and haughtiness, without merit, those common and contemptible shifts of little minds in stations too big for them.

The Nobility in England have often treated the rich plebeian with a con-

tempt which rouses a dangerous spirit of indignation. In their country retreats they often scorn the private gentleman of moderate but independent fortune, who yet possesses great influence by constant residence, and by familiar, kind, behaviour among the tenantry. They can return no visits, but among their equals; unless at the approach of a general election, when their selfish condescension is seen through, and despised as an insult; though, for the sake of private interest, it may be generally connived at and patiently borne.

The distinction which formerly subsisted between nobility and private gentlemen, or plebeians, is now lessened, not only by the more equal distribution of property, but by the
distemi-

diffemination of knowledge. The lower orders have frequently the advantage of patricians in education. They are compelled to submit to a discipline in their youth, to which the rich and great cannot, or rather will not conform. With conscious knowledge usually arises a certain degree of spirit, or, if you please, pride. This spirit, or pride, seems to yield without reluctance to claims of superiority founded *only* on *hereditary* titles, and *unacquired* property. It feels peculiar indignation when treated with contempt by those who have no natural claims to honour. It must, tacitly at least, wish to depress an artificial grandeur, which seems to operate, like overgrown weeds on salubrious plants, in keeping down the growth of real virtue.

To

To prevent the enmity of the powerful and very numerous men of property and personal merit in the middle ranks, I recommend to your Lordship great affability to them. Visit them, shew peculiar favour to the most esteemed among them, and take care, by the improvements of your mind, and the generosity of your heart, to convince them that your superiority is founded not only on your ancestor's merit, but on your own; and that, if you had not been born a Nobleman, you would still have been pre-eminent among private gentlemen by your abilities and your virtues. This desirable object is the aim of my correspondence; and I wish to see a Nobility so evidently useful and conspicuously honourable, that, in spite of Envy herself,

self, the public voice may with one accord exclaim, "*Esto perpetua.*" Unless supported by great exertions, (I do not mean of military power,) the Nobility of Civil Establishment must YIELD TO the NOBILITY OF NATURE AND VIRTUE.

I am, &c.

LETTER LI.

MY LORD,

NOTHING has of late militated more powerfully against Nobility than the publication of Lord Chesterfield's Letters. They opened the eyes of the people, and taught them to look unhurt, and with a naked eye, at that splendor, which formerly dazzled like the sun. They led men to believe, that this fascinating superiority, which at a distance appeared so glorious, was but an imposition on mankind, like the mimic suns and moons, thunder and lightning, in the theatre. The man who
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is admitted behind the scenes, and sees of what these are composed, laughs at the admiring audience.

Lord Chesterfield has let us all behind the scenes : he invites us to see the peer dress for public exhibition. There is copper instead of gold leaf stamped on the leathern robe ; glass instead of diamonds on the crown ; paint instead of health's fine tints, on the meagre cheek ; and a variety of masks and disguises at hand, for all the purposes of selfish and knavish deceit. The plain honest Englishman learns to consider them who claim to be his superiors by birth and title, as founding their superiority in little else than the meanest and most contemptible cunning. Is this the wisdom of Nobility ? superficial attainments, a
contempt

contempt for the whole species, especially the female part, a neglect of religion, a want of all *public* spirit, and a most anxious attention to self-interest, aggrandizement, and gratification. If man is so poor a creature, and human affairs so contemptible, and all that is passing on this globe mere juggling, then why put a coronet on any man's head, unless to mock him, as they put a cap on fools? A woollen nightcap, or a plain beaver, will afford warmth and shelter. Who would place a jewelled diadem on an ape's head, and a star on the breast of a baboon, unless to shew him at a fair? If Lord Chesterfield's principles are well founded, then, in the first instance, blot out his escutcheon, abolish his title, and let him take his rank where common sense

would place him, on a line with private gentlemen, unadorned and *unprivileged* by their country.

It is true, indeed, that Lord Chesterfield's son, to whom the letters were addressed, was not a *Nobleman*. But Lord Chesterfield probably drew forth for his use the choicest treasures of his wisdom; and from them the plebeian orders are to form their ideas of that which was considered as wisdom by one of the most celebrated Noblemen of his time. They are led to suspect, that similar sentiments on men and manners may prevail in others of the peerage, who display the graces with few of the virtues; and the consequence of such a suspicion is, a growing contempt for the order. They are led to think, that
what

what they have usually admired, as *all-accomplished*, has been mere *varnish*, spread on a rotten or worthless substance. It would have been policy, in those who have nothing but the externals of Nobility, to have suppressed, if possible, the letters of this graceful Nobleman, whose principles have given weight to Pope's assertion,

An *honest* man's the *noblest* work of God.

A Nobleman should from his heart abhor all simulation and dissimulation, as the poor shifts of *ignoble* meanness and cowardice. Should we venerate the lion, if he had the craft of the fox? The old Romans were true noblemen; bold, open, generous, manly; daring any thing but deceit and knavery: how would a Scipio sink in our esteem, if we saw him

him descending to the arts, artifices, and tricks of a Chesterfield, all for his *own* interest, regardless of men in general, and of his own particular society! The very dregs of the people of Rome thought and spoke *nobly*.

Then, my Lord, be not a Chesterfieldian. Be assured that an opener and manlier character is more *pleasing* to the *people of England*. Even supposing you to study nothing but *the art of pleasing*, it is the best mode to adopt such a character. Something of *heroic virtue* is expected in a Nobleman. Honour without honesty, (and how can there be honesty in simulation and dissimulation?) is a contradiction. Such honour, like a counterfeit guinea, will not bear the touchstone.

I am, &c.

LETTER LII.

MY LORD,

I Must respect the sentiments of whole nations ; and when I see a great and mighty people, enlightened by science and polished by arts, maintaining the *equality of mankind*, I pause in anxious suspense for the event of such an opinion. In the mean time, I must avow my prepossession, that the happiness of society depends on a regular subordination. The golden sceptre of lawful authority is often exchanged for a rod of iron in the hand of upstart power.

Of

Of this I am sure ; the disturbance of subordination in our own country will be attended with misery unutterable to the present race. And are we, who have but a short time to live, to lose all the enjoyment of life, by losing peace and tranquillity, in order to procure an equivocal good to our posterity ?

Dreadful are the evils naturally attendant on our short state of existence. Shall we multiply them by anarchy, confusion, and civil war ? If reforms are necessary, (and who shall say they are not desirable ?) let them be gradual, and the result of cool, dispassionate debate, and not of violence. What real benefit shall we who now live, derive from any political reform produced by the rude

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hand

hand of civil war, to compensate the loss of peace, property, and blood? Let us not be carried away by political enthusiasm, which, like the fanatical fever of Religion, spreads ruin round the land which it undertakes to deliver. Let us pursue our purposes of reformation with steady vigour, with the wisdom of cool experience; but never call the multitude to tear down by force, that which in due time will surrender at the summons of reason. Great changes in the political as well as natural body cannot safely be produced but in a length of time.

My Lord, it is greatly in the power of men exalted like yourself to civil honour, and proving your right to the exaltation by personal merit,

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to speak peace to the troubled sea of popular commotion. Respect will always be paid to merit adorned by the lustre of family. Prove yourself a real patriot, a real philanthropist, and not a mere courtier, by relinquishing all party consideration, and standing forward the promoter of peace and good order, the friend of man, however distinguished by rank or station, the patron of human nature. You remember Virgil's fine description of the power which one *man of PERSONAL authority* exercises over the multitude.

The wickedness and the misery of man are strongly evinced by his restlessness, and the alacrity with which he takes up the sword, in civil tumults. Is not the world wide enough

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for

for us all to live happy in it, without shedding each other's blood? In the name of Heaven, let the sword at last be sheathed; let all rights compatible with law and order be amicably restored to the people; and let not the present generation sacrifice its happiness to the future, by ferocious contest.

Violence, on the part of government, will effect nothing durable. The spirit of the times requires great wisdom and great moderation in the rulers. Public virtue is called for by the exigencies of the state. Great men must stand forth, and subdue the multitude, not by the sword, but by PERSUASION. AN OPINION of their virtues and unfeigned patriotism must secure the confidence of the people. Personal authority, founded on an opinion
nion

nion of superior virtue and ability, will effect wonders.

Here then you will have an opportunity of displaying the effects of your education, the noble spirit which you have derived from the study of the ancients, and the ability you have acquired by a most diligent cultivation of your understanding. Here is a fine field for your talents. May they be exercised for your own glory and the happiness of your country.

PEACE, GOOD ORDER, and LIBERTY, unspoiled by licentiousness!—let the promotion and establishment of these be the scope of your honourable life.—AGNOSCO PROCEREM.

I am, &c.

LETTER LIII.

MY LORD,

ENGLAND was called POLYOLBION,
the seat of political happiness.
Read *Campbell's Political Survey*, and
you will be led to contemplate the
natural advantages of which it is ca-
pable. Look at it, and you will see
it at this time abounding in blessings
above every nation on the globe.
Illuminated with science, polished
with arts, enriched with commerce,
agriculture, manufactures, and blest
with liberty, it is a country, in
which to have been born may be
deemed

deemed a favour of Providence. Happily for us, who now in our turn exist on this fortunate island, it is at this time in the zenith of its glory.

Shall then, my Lord, tumult and civil war deprive us, who now live, of the feast which Heaven has placed before us? Let us have greater regard for ourselves, than to suffer the enjoyment of our national happiness to be destroyed or diminished by a restless desire of change, to be accomplished by *violence*, and with a *haste* incompatible with wisdom.

I mean not, in a declamatory panyric, to assert that there is no room for reform. All independent men are agreed on that point. There
is

is great room for reform. But a strong and venerable building may be repaired and altered, without taking it down and rebuilding it from the foundation. I would employ the best surveyors, the best workmen, and the best materials; but I should be upon my guard against those eager undertakers who would level all, lest when they come to rebuild, they should leave an edifice of brick or of wood, where they found one of stone.

The good sense of this nation will in time correct whatever is wrong in the constitution. None will suffer when wisdom and moderation guide and controul the zeal of the political reformer: but who can foretell the consequences of sudden convulsion? Alteratives will restore health in time,
without

without the pain of amputation, or the loathsomeness of nauseous medicine.

Use your influence then, my Lord, exert your eloquence, in recommending moderation. Do not think to repress by overbearing authority the spirit of improvement which pervades and does honour to the times. It is too strong to be kept under, too warm to be stifled, too enlightened to be deceived. It will prevail. Only, let it not disturb the *happiness* of the *present generation*. Let no families be ruined, no innocent blood be shed, no public or private distress detract from the glories, and embitter the happiness, of the intended reformation.

May your improvements and personal merit be so great, and so well
imitated

imitated by your compeers, that the hand of reform, when it comes to the Peerage, may stop the uplifted axe, and spare to cut down a branch which it finds not only ornamental, but beneficial to the land by its fruits and its shade * !

I am, &c.

* Omnes boni semper nobilitati favemus, & quia reipublicæ utile est nobiles esse homines dignos majoribus suis, et quia valere debet apud nos senes, clarorum hominum de reipublicâ meritorum memoria, etiam mortuorum.

Cic. pro Sestio.

L E T T E R L I V .

MY LORD,

W HATEVER revolutions on the face of this little globe may be effected by the wonderful dispensations of Providence, you will never repent that you have devoted your youth to the improvement of your mind, and the formation of a character that will appear great, like the columns of some ancient city in ruins, amid the wreck of empire. The British constitution at present stands firm on the hearts of the people ; but even if it should unfortunately be shaken, personal merit cannot lose its
honours,

honours, and must be called forth by the exigencies of the times to honourable action and distinction.

But even in the shade of retirement, if adversity should drive you to its shelter, the knowledge you will have accumulated, and the dignity of mind you will have acquired, must render your retreat illustrious. These will furnish you with a pleasure, of which no political revolution can deprive you, in solitude and in old age.

Short is the time allotted us in this life ; shorter still the period of our activity. May we be wiser than to add misery to the short duration of our existence, by cruel tumults, by discord, by hatred, and by shedding the blood of our poor fellow-creatures, for

RIGHTS,

RIGHTS, some of which are imaginary, but which, if real and possessed, would add but little to the solid comforts of each individual! Join with me in the wish, my Lord, that we may duly preserve the national happiness we enjoy; that our reforms may be temperate, the result of the maturest deliberation; and that the pen and the tongue may supersede the necessity of the sword among creatures pretending to reason. *Peace be within our walls, and plenteousness within our palaces, and our COTTAGES also.* May science, arts, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and religion, employ our minds during our short pilgrimage, and preserve us from attempts at *unnecessary* changes, which, whatever influence they may have on posterity, are sure to destroy the peace

peace and comfort of the present generation! May the great never oppress the middle and lowest ranks, and may the middle and lowest ranks never oppose the *great* through ENVY!

I adjure you, my Lord, by the honour of your ancestry, and your own, to stand forth yourself, with your compeers by your side, in defence of the constitution. But think not that *to retain all its abuses and corruptions*, is TO DEFEND IT. Recall it to its first principles; and where it has grown sickly or infirm by age, let it be restored to rejuvenescence. Let it be put into Medea's caldron; but destroy it not; because the testimony of time and experience has pronounced that it is favourable to the happiness and improvement of human nature.

Science,

Science, arts, commerce, liberty, have flourished under it in a degree envied by all Europe. Why may they not continue to flourish unhurt; especially when new health and vigour shall be infused into it by the political physicians in consultation? The horrid barbarism of civil war must banish every thing grateful and pleasant from the land. Rational creatures must improve society by reason. A sword is a disgrace to human nature. If we must decide our contests by brute-force, let us pull down our houses, disperse our cities, take up our abode in the woods, and feed upon acorns. In countries pretending to civilization there should be no war, much less intestine war, which may be justly called political suicide.

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They are Goths and Vandals in mind, however splendid their appearance, who delight in war. You, my Lord, have softened your disposition by the study of the fine arts, and must view with disapprobation, as well as pity, thousands and tens of thousands of poor short-lived mortals drawn up on a plain, ready to cut each other's throats for hire, at the command of a mortal as wretched as themselves, but clothed in a little brief authority. Plough-shares and pruning-hooks, axes and hammers—these are the arms of a happy, enlightened, and Christian people. Use the influence which your birth and rank give you; exert the abilities with which God and your education have furnished you, in deriving on yourself the blessing pronounced on the PEACE-MAKERS.

I am, &c.

LETTER LV.

MY LORD,

I Have said nothing of your proficiency in the modern languages. It appeared to me unnecessary, because modern education dwells sufficiently on modern languages; and I know you were initiated in French and Italian at an early period of your life; and that they had almost *engrossed* your attention.

I wished to impress the necessity of an acquaintance with the *ancient* languages and *ancient* authors. This was one main scope of my advice. I

am confident that a real dignity of character, and the most commanding eloquence, are to be derived from the study and imitation of the ancients.

Lord Chatham formed himself on the ancients; and has the House of Peers, in modern times, exhibited one character so truly great as Lord Chatham? He stood there a colossal figure. Men of great natural sense, of great and acquired accomplishments, and of wonderful habits of business, looked up to him in silent reverence, as they would survey a meteor. The truth is, he lived in his youth among the ancient Greeks and Romans. He caught their spirit, adopted their manners, and modernized their eloquence. An old Roman grafted on a modern Englishman, produced the
golden

golden fruit of true patriotism, real, personal greatness, and nobility undebted to a genealogical table.

On these ancients I wish you, my Lord, to form yourself as on a model. Let no one persuade you that the change of times and manners will not allow such characters. What was once truly great and beautiful, will always continue so, because truth is immutable. The very rarity of such characters in modern times will add weight to their value, and brilliancy to their lustre.

The spirit of ridicule which has remarkably prevailed in latter ages, has indeed impeded the growth of truly great political characters; but against its baneful effects I have al-

ready given you a caution. You need not profess before the wag, Lord * * * *, that you are imitating an old Roman; you may keep the secret in your own bosom inviolate; but at the same time continue the imitation. In life, and in the arts, there is no method of study more successful than that of working after a model; and as the statuary copies the ancient model, so let the statesman and the orator.

Ask yourself whether such a sentiment, or speech, or action, would have become some of the patriot and heroic characters delineated in the pages of a Livy. If it would be too mean for a Scipio, discard it at once as unfit for a British Nobleman. The dignity and spirit which such an emulation will inspire, will render you superior,

perior, as a MAN, (THE NOBLEST DISTINCTION,) not only to those over whom you are elevated by inheritance, but to those of your compeers who are unacquainted with all models of the human character but such as are exhibited in modern history, in the three or four last centuries, when both war and civil government have been conducted by *little arts*, more congenial to *little minds* than the generous spirit of ancient republicanism.

I am, &c.

LETTER LVI.

MY LORD,

THERE is a fyren, whose enchanting voice may render all that I have said of no avail. SLOTH is her name. Shut your ears against her song, and fly from her as from a pestilence. It is the great misfortune of rank and abundance, that it wants spurs to activity. It knows not those powerful incentives to exertion which arise from necessity struggling for abundance, or from obscurity emerging into light.

Pains must be taken to create incentives. The desire of honour,
fame,

fame, popularity, naturally stimulates the heart to laudable and useful efforts, and rouses those who else would wallow in the sty of Epicurus.

Therefore acquiesce not in the *honour* which your forefathers earned. To you it may be but a splendid disgrace. *Therefore* aspire at a well-earned *fame*, which may render you respected throughout life, and survive to distant ages. *Therefore* despise not the *people*, to promote whose happiness is the duty of every one who shares in government or legislation; despise not their plaudits, for they are honest rewards bestowed on merit, by hands which move in unison with hearts attached by nature, though sometimes misled by passion, to every thing UPRIGHT AND FAIR.

Let

Let the attainment of these distinctions call you from the slumbers of indolence on the rose-beds of the Sybarites. Motives like these are indeed subordinate to the sublime ones of virtue and disinterested generosity. But in the present infirm state of human nature, they are found useful, because they operate when better ones are ineffectual. Nay, they often lead to true virtue of the purest kind. He who has once been roused to virtuous action, and tasted the sweets, not only of its consciousness, but of fame and applause, will go on in the glorious career, and finish as he began and proceeded, an honour to his country and to human nature.

Admit a little virtuous enthusiasm into your temper. Cold discretion,

subtle policy, mean distrust, craft and caution, may indeed guard against danger; but they lead not, unless mixed with a little virtuous enthusiasm, to those heights of excellence, which have saved a country, by withstanding powerfully the encroachment of tyrants, and the madness of the people. These qualities are all consistent with selfishness. They want, and therefore cannot confer, dignity.

I am combating indolence. I can call forth no auxiliary so potent as virtuous enthusiasm. Catch the pure flame, my Lord, and let it fire all the latent sparks of virtue in your breast, those sparks which become extinct in thousands and tens of thousands, through the want of it. May it burn with steady heat, and after
warning

warming and enlightening all around you in life, burst from your urn, and while it points to heaven, diffuse a glory round your tomb, not to be rivalled by the blazonry of the herald painter! What can the chisel of the sculptor do, compared to the image engraven on the hearts of a grateful people? I admire the fine figures of Lord Chatham in Westminster Abbey and Guildhall; but I admire them for the sculptor's skill; I look not there for an idea of the MAN. All the civilized world have erected monuments to him in their hearts and imaginations.

It is certain, after all, that many casual circumstances must concur to call forth *extraordinary* exertions, and to give *universal* celebrity. Those
circum-

circumstances may not happen to you. But though you should not be able to eclipse all others in the cabinet, in the senate, or in the field, yet you may adorn Nobility with some of its most amiable graces in the circles of private life. Every thing pleasing and beneficent, all that adds to the sweetness of domestic life, and the delight and ornament of neighbourly intercourse, will be required from you, in peculiar perfection, as A NOBLEMAN. Birth, education, privileges of various kinds, lead the public to expect in a *Nobleman*, a gentleman of the highest polish, a philanthropist, a man anxious to do good, and to diffuse pleasure and satisfaction, wherever the sphere of his influence extends. But this demands great activity. Indolence will render

your best intentions abortive, and cause you, amidst a thousand opportunities of pleasure, honour, and beneficence, to live and die a cypher. It will conduct you to the family vault with nothing but an "*Hic jacet*" on your tomb. Walk into Westminster Abbey, and learn to scorn such insignificance.

Yet at the same time remember, that innocent insignificance is far more estimable than mischievous abilities; and that accursed ambition which pursues fame, grandeur, and despotic power, through *fields of blood*. What are Tigers, Wolves, and Hyænas to sanguinary Despots?

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LVII.

MY LORD,

ENOUGH of discipline. I congratulate you on your proficiency; and, with a full confidence in your good sense and good conduct, lay aside the gravity of advice. Man lives not for *business* alone; but to enjoy, at proper seasons, the rich repast of pleasure which the God of Nature has placed before him. Think not, that in recommending application to letters, and the preservation of your dignity, I would prohibit all pursuit of pleasure. Many are the necessary intervals of study and public

lic affairs, which cannot be more usefully employed, than in liberal, gentleman-like, rational diversions. None will have acquired a better right to such indulgences, than one who shall have spent his time in improving his mind and preserving his dignity, not to gratify pride, but that he may be found extensively useful, and THEREFORE TRULY HONOURABLE. He requires amusements for the health of his mind, and he has a just claim to them. Is the honey to be engrossed by the idle drone, who brings nothing into the hive; who neither assists in the construction of the cells, nor the increase of stores, nor the general defence? It is not, however, necessary to urge this point, because most young men, high in rank and affluent in fortune, want

no other impulse to the gaieties of life, but their own propensities to them; and are self-taught proficient in the school of pleasure.

An idea prevails among the superficial, that scholars are often destitute of the agreeable and companionable qualities; and that they think too much on all that occurs, to admit that light, airy, frivolous nothingness, which passes away elegant or dissipated leisure in thoughtless gaiety. Thus dunces triumph, in their animal vivacity, over men of sense. They are loud, audacious, and unfeeling; and often reduce the modest man of genius to silence and apparent insignificance, by their unblushing effrontery. Thus, among the ladies, and in all gay society, the most ac-

complished

complished young men sometimes appear below themselves, and almost yield, without a contest, their claims to superiority. Now, my Lord, I wish you on no occasion to appear inferior; but, for the sake of doing justice to the solid improvements you have made, the real Graces whom you have courted, to shine equally in the senate and the assembly, in the library and at the tea-table. Polish yourself, therefore, your external manners I mean, by elegant pleasures, in chosen society.

Sacrifice to the Graces, as you have already cultivated the Muses and the Virtues. This assemblage of goddesses, rendered propitious, will unite in forming that celebrated character, seldom indeed seen, an all-

all-accomplished man. I contend that in pursuing the art of pleasing, you become not an artful, crafty sycophant, renouncing, with honesty and sincerity, all just pretensions to Nobility. To appear kind and gentle and agreeable, be so. Let your brilliants bear the examination of the nicest lapidary. Let not your side-board be furnished with plated baubles, but solid silver and gold. How can a man pretend to honour, whose whole intercourse with his fellow-creatures is founded on deceit? What satisfaction in friendship and conversation can be felt by the *mean man*, though by abuse called a *Nobleman*, who, in the tenderest intercourse, in his warmest professions, has been acting a part like a player; and whose mind, if it

could be laid open, would, like a whited sepulchre, present rottenness to the view, and encrease abhorrence by a mean endeavour to CHEAT the eye by concealing deformity?

To sweeten the temper, and dissipate the clouds of the mental horizon, I advise you to participate in elegant amusements. But let them not degrade, by leading you to low company; low, I mean, not only in rank, but in accomplishments, in virtue, and the liberal qualities of a liberal education. A Peer may be pleased with music, without associating with fiddlers; he may be delighted in theatres, without making players his bosom friends; he may admire a dancer's agility, without rendering him his confidential companion.

panion. Lord * * * * * fills his noble mansion in the summer with opera singers, Italian dancers, comic actors, musicians, firework makers, who dine, and sup, and sleep for months under his roof; while his door never opens to the clergy in his neighbourhood, to any of the professions, to capital artists, to men of letters and science, or to the poor. Thus he forfeits his popularity, loses much pleasant conversation, and renders, as far as his influence extends, the whole Peerage contemptible. He must possess but little MIND, who can acquiesce in the society of persons, who, whatever dexterity or agility they boast, or whatever theatrical excellence they display, are usually unprepared by education and company to become the familiar

confidential associates of hereditary Law-givers, high-born and high-bred Peers of the realm. There are public places for all amusements, and they are there conducted with the greatest skill: he who is not contented with attending these, but chuses to *domesticate* the performers, evinces that he has no resources in himself; that letters, science, politics, have no charms for him; and that he is unworthy the distinctions which the laws of his country allow *him*, SOLELY because his forefather earned them.

You will never be reduced to the wretched necessity of keeping buffoons in your house, if you preserve a relish for rational conversation with persons of sense and character; if you take care to cherish a taste for
litera-

literature ; if you partake in the common amusements, at due seasons ; and, above all, if you give your attention to state affairs, to the public happiness, the proper province of a real Nobleman.

In public affairs you will, I conclude, from the principles you have imbibed in the schools of antiquity, ever lean to the side of liberty and the people. Common sense dictates, and common humanity eagerly adopts the idea, that the few were made for the *many*, not the many for the few. Your greatness of mind will sacrifice every selfish view to the public benefit. If a REFORM should be required, which may render it necessary that you should give up your dominion over the borough of * * *,
or

or that of * * *, or that of * * * *, and your influence in the county election, you will renounce them with alacrity; you will, if you act consistently with those ideas of justice and honour, which I know you entertain, be among the first to promote such a REFORM, whatever it may cost you.

Human affairs, we all know, will ever stop at a point far below perfection; but it is the business of man in society, to be ever urging the stone up the hill. Time causes every human institution to recede from its original purpose. No wonder that the constitution of a senate, established in very early times, should at length want renewal. What good and substantial reason can be assigned, why the present generation may not enjoy

enjoy the benefit of its renewal, as well as some future? Not only liberty and the true spirit of the constitution are interested in a reform of parliament, but the MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE, and consequently their happiness, the ultimate end of all government. Corruption will no longer pervade all ranks, in every competition, from a county election to the choice of a parish beadle. Merit will dare to emerge from her shade. Truth, no longer overborne, will advance, with all her native confidence, to put in her claim to just esteem. Astræa will return from her exile. Long services, or great talents and acquirements, employed for the public good, will meet with their reward. The prizes, which justly belong to merit, will not be lavishly expended

in purchasing majorities directed in their decisions by ONE MAN. Young adventurers, in all the professions, will aspire at excellence, with a prospect of honour and emolument in their mature age, even though they should want *that succedaneum for every excellence*, a FRIEND;—a FRIEND among borough-mongers, a PATRON among those who employ the advantages of birth and fortune, in influencing votes, where votes cannot be influenced consistently with honour or honesty.

You, my Lord, will worship with me in the temple of Liberty, built, as it is in England, on the massy arches of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; but if the FOUNDATION is decayed, you will, in your veneration

neration for the goddess, endeavour to preserve her shrine from falling, and urge the people to employ the most skilful masons, the best marble, and the strongest cement in its repair.

THUS REPAIRED, enter the temple with me, my Lord; and let us unite our voices to the general anthems of whole nations, hailing the sun of reason as it daily bursts through the clouds of prejudice, celebrating the Nobility of Nature and Virtue, and doing willing homage to the MAJESTY OF THE PEOPLE, while we dutifully obey the EXECUTIVE POWERS, constituted and maintained by the nation, as guardians and protectors of the PUBLIC FELICITY.

I am, &c.

THE END.

E R R A T A.

Page xxxiv. line 4. after *palace* add *however*.

5. after symmetry add or.

90. — 9. for *astbentic* read *asthenic*.

121. — 10. dele *zealous*.

177. — 3. after *ideas* insert *and*.

187. — 3. delete *and* before *Manilius*, and read *et* before *Gratius*.

233. — II. after *receiving* insert it.

313. — II. for *without* read *with*.



